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SELF-DEPENDENCE.

BY MATTHEW ARNOLD.

Weary of myself, and sick of asking
What I am, and what I ought to be,
At the vessel's prow I stand, which bears me
Forwards, forwards o'er the star-lit sea.

And a look of passionate desire
O'er the sea and to the stars I send:
"Ye, who from my childhood up have calmed me,
Calm me, ah, compose me to the end!"

"Ah, once more," I cried, "ye Stars, ye Waters,
In my heart your mighty charm renew!
Still, still let me, as I gaze upon you,
Feel my soul becoming vast like you!"

From the intense, clear, star-sown vault of heaven,
Over the lit sea's unquiet way,
In the rustling night air came the answer—
"Would'st thou *be* as these are? *Live* as they!

"Unaffrighted by the silence round them,
Undistracted by the sights they see,
These demand not that the things without them
Yield them love, amusement, sympathy.

"And with joy the stars perform their shining,
And the sea its long moon-silvered roll,
For alone they live, nor pine with noting
All the fever of some differing soul.

"Bounded by themselves, and unobservant
In what state God's other works may be,
In their own tasks all their powers pouring,
These attain the mighty life you see."

O, air-born Voice! long since, severely clear,
A cry like thine in my own heart I hear,
"Resolve to be thyself, and know that he
Who finds himself loses his misery!"

HEARTS ERRANT.

CHAPTER XIV.

PARIS IN NOVEMBER.

Rainy and sloppy enough, but, nevertheless, with a certain jaunty gayety about it as different as possible from the heavy, solemn, deeply foggy spirit in which London takes the same month. This is how our party found Paris in November. With a thousand gas-lamps from *café* and *restaurant*, reflected in a thousand rain-pools upon the streaming Boulevards—with a thousand *fiâcres* spreading themselves over the well-washed pavements, joyous, gesticulative, fresh from Havre, Biarritz, and Ostend, or just released from the awful solitude of those French country-houses which are like properties in Chancery, or private madhouses, or anything, in fact, excepting the handsome, well-kept abodes which stand for the same thing in England. "Paris is France." The Parisian suffers an annual period of exile from this dear Paris of his, and having submitted with more or less of patience to the inexorable tyranny of custom, returns to congratulate himself and every acquaintance he meets that the yearly penance is completed, and that he finds himself once more restored to life and—Paris.

It was fortunate that Olive had her own all-compensating resources, for it must be confessed that before Paris was reached she was in insufficiently bad odor with all her companions, save, indeed, Miss Ursula, who was not likely ever to misunderstand her, and Colonel St. Maur, who began to think that he was not likely ever to understand her. It happens sometimes that a tide of misconception and injustice sets in against an innocent person—a tide that gathers volume as it rolls, and can by no means be turned until it has spent its strength, which is very bewildering to those lovers of justice whose experience of mundane disarrangements has not yet been sufficient to accustom them to the spectacle of truth turned topsy-turvy, and wrong looking for all the world like right, and right wearing an abashed face as if it were wrong.

Not that Olive wore such a face. By no means. Through all the sublime scenes of that Swiss mountain-world she lived, as it were, in a dream—a grand, beautiful dream. Her soul drank in the glories of the Alpine scene, and trembled with admiring awe amidst the stately congress of cloud-crowned mountain-kings. She rested her spirit on the "eternal snows" of the steadfast hills which had been rooted in creation, and so her cheeks gathered roses there, and the great calm of Nature's majesty looked out of her deep, earnest eyes, over and beyond the cold glances and unsympathizing faces of her companions.

"What a little witch it is!" mused the colonel, studying through his drooped eyelids the face that was flashing back all the shifting splendors of the Righi sunset. "She slips through one's fingers in the coolest, calmest way! She's quite beyond me—the first of the sex that ever was! Pshaw! it's a fine piece of acting in its way, and original—very—but I have no doubt the thing is simple enough, like a conjurer's trick, when you know it, which I don't—*yet*."

And the colonel turned to less perplexing studies, to where Claris and her young lady friends sat, in pretty attitudes of exhaustion, with their backs to the sunset, resting from their long climb, and Isabel counter-posing a melancholy Pole whom she had managed to beckon on from Breuil, where he was arranging himself *en prince déchû* for the benefit of all whom it might concern. All this was patent enough to Colonel St. Maur's practised observation; he read them all, brilliant Claris included, like a well-conned book. Just such characters as these, with a little better or worse acting, had always appeared in the vaudeville of life performed before him, and he was tired enough of them, as of everything else. He sat the play out, of course, and yawned as much as good breeding would permit; but he was awfully weary; he would have given something handsome to have exchanged places with the open-mouthed rustic in the pit, to whom all the glitter was gold, and all the seeming real. He was so used to tinsel and paste that he did not believe in the ring of the true metal, or recognize the flash fo the real stone.

Mrs. Decies' motherly prescience had, of course, told her why her son turned back from Chamounix, and, gentle as she was, she could not forgive Olive. Mothers are sometimes hard upon young ladies who accept their sons, but depend upon it they would have been harder still if the young ladies had refused them. Olive sought in vain to propitiate Reginald's mother, partly from real liking for the lady herself, partly from a tender, womanly remorse for the mischief she had unintentionally done. But not a crystal glacier glittering above the track of the travellers was colder or more impenetrable than the offended mother, and poor Olive, distressed and discouraged, was fain to fall back upon her aunt's ever-ready sympathy.

Isabel and Jessie Bohun had a more personal cause of displeasure against Olive. It was intolerable that this little silent, abstracted creature (so unattractive, too!), should monopolize the male interest of the party. And that little air of unconsciousness was so provoking—and so stupidly successful!

And Claris! Well, Claris had her own private reasons for feeling exceedingly venomous towards her sister, although you would never have guessed it. Indeed, so sweet and tender was she, that you might have arrived at a very different conclusion—as is the way of this blundering world. Good health, *success*, and a due sense of the becomingness of good temper, kept Claris always smiling and urbane; and the quality which these represent has a great deal more than its (net) value in the social estimate. Olive's little bursts of impetuosity, her "righteous indignations," might be worth more in reality, but they stood at considerably less than zero in the popular balance-sheet.

Also, what did the world know or care about the intense feelings which kept this little girl silent and abstracted? What of the rapture of love and devotion with which her soul fell down and worshipped when brought face to face with the grandeur of God's creation? when she could have cried out in very pain at the oppression of a sublimity of beauty that seemed to demand more than mortal powers of conception? The bright sparkle of Claris's wit, the lively rattle of Isabel Bohun's clever conversation, were a great deal more interesting to most people—and no wonder, perhaps. To these young ladies this Alpine paradise was but one of the sights that must be "done;" a little tedious and toilsome in places, but got through comfortably enough, on the whole, with the help of gay *tables d'hôte* and an ever-varying stream of fellow-tourists. If Chamounix, and Zermatt, and the Oeschinen Thal were a long way up, and sunset on the Righi was "a pull," and they could not be left behind, there was compensation on the gay shores of Lake Leman, and an opening vista of Paris delights beyond the snow-capped peak and the thundering avalanche. And the "something to talk about afterwards" carries us through a great deal of present effort and discomfort.

They were very gay in Paris. The English ambassador was first cousin to Mrs. Decies, and the Bohuns had spent last winter in Paris, and had been received everywhere, from the Faubourg St. German to the Chaussée d'Antin. And in her quality of English heiress, supplementing her quality of English belle, Claris found herself likewise received with open arms by the cream of Parisian society. Only the Tuileries were closed to her—a very important and mortifying "only." But her presentation at the English court had been delayed until after her marriage—the duchess deciding that the circumstances of her engagement rendered the delay advisable—and so the "open sesame" to the Continental courts was wanting. She had the triumph of her Parisian *début* all to herself, for, a few days after her arrival at Meurice's, Miss Ursula caught a severe cold, which *tleume*, or the French doctor's meddling with an English constitution, or something else, developed into low fever, which entirely confined the poor lady to her room, and kept Olive in devoted attendance upon her. And the fever not being of a serious or dangerous complexion, I am not sure that the two did not enjoy very much their enforced seclusion.

Contemporaneous with Miss Ursula's first symptoms of sore throat happened those important political events in England to which we have already alluded, and which so entirely changed Colonel St. Maur's views. A turn of the wheel brought the Duke of Arlingford into place and power, and took him from his studio to the fulfillment of high and responsible public duties. A brief note, inclosed in two sheets of the duchess's fine, bold handwriting, apprised Claris of this fact, and breathed a tender regret over the "Loves of the Angels," which must needs await the country's leisure. Claris read this note aloud in the drawing-room, when she came down dressed for a ball at the Austrian ambassador's, and Colonel St. Maur looked at her the while from under the drooping lids, which this time hardly softened a sudden, quick flash of the steel-gray eyes. Isabel Bohun, at least, caught it, and scanned Claris curiously, as she stood with her white cloak falling from her marble shoulders, and her flower-crowned head reigning in graceful state over a subject array of soft lace and tulle, and delicately-tinted blossoms. Isabel thought she had never seen Claris looking so beautiful, and there was a little satisfied elation in the conviction that the colonel thought so too. That "little creature" did not enjoy quite such a monopoly as she had seemed to do.

For four weeks Miss Ursula's fever kept her a prisoner, and Olive, in the intervals of her nursing and watching, took walks and drives under the guardianship of Miss Perks. She could not have asked the chaperonage of Mrs. Decies, even if that offended mother had not been in perpetual requisition for the long list of visiting engagements which filled up the days and nights of the other young ladies. From nine to eleven in the morning were the hours at which Miss Ursula least missed her companionship, so that Olive generally chose that time for her absences. She drove up the Champs Elysées and through the Barrière to the Bois de Boulogne one bright wintry morning, musing with a great sense of relief upon the escape which the retirement of her aunt's illness had brought her from the haunting presence of Colonel St. Maur. That presence had been to her a sort of shadowy phantom pursuing her through all the high-wrought happiness of those Alpine weeks, and now that the ghost seemed to be laid she felt that she could breathe again more freely. But on turning out of one of the alleys—for she had left her carriage to walk—her heart beat quickly, for immediately before her stood the colonel himself. He greeted her with his ordinary self-possession, and scarcely even expressed surprise at meeting her. He walked by her side for a few minutes, until a sudden exclamation from Miss Perks, who had fallen back a step or two, caused Olive to turn round quickly.

"Miss Claris!" exclaimed the maid, pointing to a carriage which was driving away.

Olive caught the outline of a figure wonderfully like that of Claris. Nevertheless she rebuked the abegail.

"Impossible, Perks! Miss Claris is never even out of her room at this time. You must be mistaken."

Which Perks, recovered from her surprise and abashed at having thus brought herself into notice, acknowledged with all humility.

"It was so like Miss Claris's gray hat," she murmured, apologetically.

The colonel smiled—a little amused smile.

"One gray hat is very like another," he said, quietly, "and it is not even difficult in Paris to find two *ladies* alike."

Whereupon Miss Perks felt herself in a ridiculous minority.

Olive was glad to regain her carriage and to suffer Colonel St. Maur to hand her in. He stood with uncovered head, bowing low, as she drove off. His manner to her had always that profound respect which is so flattering to all women, and especially to very young women. Looking back an instant at his fine face, his elegant, distinguished carriage, remembering all his graces and accomplishments and the marked preference which no humility could prevent her understanding Olive wondered at the instinctive dislike and distrust she could not conquer.

The door of her sister's room stood just ajar, and she looked in on passing to tell Claris that her "double" existed in Paris, and had appeared to them an hour since. The room was empty, but on a chair lay a gray hat, and across the back of the same chair was thrown a gray cloak—just such a cloak, Olive remembered, as the "double" had worn. Olive smiled as she turned into the breakfast-room farther on, where Mrs. Decies, Claris, and the Bohuns sat over a late breakfast. Claris smiled too when she heard how Perks had mistaken some stranger for the mistress whose pillow in the early morning had, she declared, attractions for her which the Bois did not possess.

"It seem to me, though," she added, laughing, "that this is a dangerous likeness for me. Who knows what queer things my 'double' may do, and leave me the credit of? That sort of thing is in the air of Paris, you know. You remember Marie Antoinette (poor creature!) and the diamond necklace, and Cardinal de Rohan, and all that story. Upon my word, I feel frightened. Listen, my friends. If you should hear of a gray hat and cloak being seen at Mabille, or the Palais Royal, or any other dreadful place, or wandering about at any time under suspicious circumstances, let me beg that you will believe *I* have nothing to do with them." Which everybody promised very heartily.

Claris met Colonel St. Maur in the evening at a concert given by English *artistes*, and she told him the story of her mysterious "double," begging him, in Mrs. Decies' hearing, to reserve his judgment of any extraordinary action he might see performed by a gray hat and cloak.

Colonel St. Maur acknowledged that he had been present when the gray apparition had appeared to Olive and her maid, but added that he had not himself seen the likeness the others had found so extraordinary.

"People see these things so differently," he concluded, with a French shrug of the shoulders.

After this Olive stayed at home. Miss Ursula was improving so rapidly, that in a few days the doctor promised her she should venture out in a close carriage. Olive would not risk a second encounter with the colonel. She was thankful now that this one had come at the end of her rambles instead of at the beginning—that those dreamy hours spent among the "dim, religious" beauties of St. Sulpice and St. Rock, among the Claudes, and Rubenses, and Raphaels of the Louvre, and under the grand historical shadow of the Tuileries, had not been disturbed by such an unwelcome intrusion. All her feeling of freedom was ended; the streets of Paris were as much haunted as had been the mystic region of the Alps.

The early December weather was clear and bracing, and Miss Ursula grew strong again; not strong enough for late hours and crowded rooms, but strong enough to see, one by one, all the wonders of Paris—strong enough even to spend a day at Versailles, and another at Vincennes. But these last were under protest from both the doctor and Olive.

It happened one day that Olive and her aunt had sallied forth on a "shopping" expedition. The last of their purchases was made in a flower-shop—one of those delicious bowers of bloom which we come upon with so much refreshment in Paris, and which we should be so glad to find in the dingier streets of dear old smoky London. By the time they reached this last point in their excursion, Miss Ursula found herself weary. Auguste was despatched for a *voiture de remise*, and the mistress of the shop—a smiling, gracious, Parisian—begged the ladies to enter her little *salon* at the back of the shop, and there to await more at their ease the return of their domestic. Miss Ursula accepted the kind offer, and sank with a sigh of satisfaction into a velvet arm-chair. Olive's seat chanced to be opposite a gilded mirror, and this mirror was opposite the door leading into the shop, which door madame had left partly open on her return to her post. Miss Ursula, too weary to talk, closed her eyes and lay back in her chair. Olive amused herself by watching in the mirror madame's ever-recurring customers. First a Parisian dandy jumped down from his English "tog-cart" at the door, and, holding his hat in his hand, saluted madame with as much deference as if she had been a duchess. He selected a superb ball bouquet, drew off his leather-colored glove to write an address, and bowed himself out again to his "tog-cart." Next a *grande dame* stepped from her handsome carriage, and carried away with her a sweet atmosphere of *violettes de Parme*. Then a neat *bonne*, with a market-basket on her arm, and the daintiest of white gauffered caps on her head, chose a spray of pink moss rose-buds *à trois sous*, and carried them lovingly in her hand back to her little kitchen on the third-floor in the Rue St. Antoine. Next a sparkling girl with bright black eyes, and a rich bloom upon her clear brown cheek, attended by another white-capped maid, hovered from blossom to blossom like a brilliant butterfly, choosing a coiffure for her first ball, and utterly distracted amongst the rival claims of scarlet geranium which became her so well, and white camelias which were so charming, and blush-tinted azaleas which madame wove into ravishing sprays, and held up for her final subjugation.

Madame's next customer was Colonel St. Maur. He was perfectly unconscious of the watchful eyes fixed upon him as he rapidly, and with that masterly decision which impresses one so much in some people, helped himself from madame's vases to the flowers he wanted, choosing them without a moment's hesitation, and arranging them as he went on with a taste and skill which drew exclamations of delight from the tasteful *Parisienne*. Purple heliotrope and scented leaves of verbena, creamy roses and rich crimson bells of fuchsia, quivering sprays of light maiden-hair fern, blue violets and almond-white buds breaking from their mossy shell, the whole edged round with dark, glossy leaves of myrtle, and fringed with delicate lace. Olive wondered a little for whose pleasure this sweet compliment was intended, and then she grew nervously anxious lest Auguste should return and betray their neighborhood to the colonel. Fortune favored her, however; the colonel completed his arrangements, handed a gold piece over the counter, and was crossing the Place de la Madeleine before Auguste arrived, breathlessly voluble, excusing the delay for which his young mistress inwardly blessed him.

Certainly something had gone wrong with Claris that day. She came late to the dinner-table, and, for the first time in her life, she was flurried and fitful in manner. She kept Mrs. Decies and the carriage which was to take them to the Duchess de Tressailles' "At Home" waiting full half-an-hour, and then she came down without her gloves, and whilst Perks was bringing the gloves she discovered that she had also forgotten her fan, and just as she was seated in the carriage she cried out that she had left her bouquet on the dressing-table, all of which irregularities were unprecedented in the composed experience of Claris. And Olive, flying to the rescue, suddenly discovered that the bouquet which she was carrying was Colonel St. Maur's. Not that the discovery surprised her much; in foreign life a bouquet is the commonest compliment, and Claris received at least half-a-dozen every day. But Claris's unusual discomposure *did* surprise her, and sitting over her bedroom fire that night she traced the cause—the Indian mail was two days overdue.

CHAPTER XV.

ARLINGFORD AT CHRISTMAS.

A grain of mustard-seed, we all know—or *ought* to know—may grow into a spreading tree; but who can tell what a forest of mischief may spring from a single root of scandal? The seed is winged, and every idle breath of gossip blows it hither and thither, like a tuft of thistle-down, and every soil on which it falls helps to fructify it; and the plant that is easily pulled up when it is yet but a tender seedling germ, breaks up the earth, and leaves an ugly yawning gap, which buries a hundred promising young stems within it, when once it has come to its growth—all useless as that growth may be.

Miss Ursula's illness detained her party in Paris so late that Christmas and Arlingford were upon them before they were ready for either. They hurried through such necessary business as had to be settled at home, and leaving Miss Hetty and the Armitage steward to make Christmas for Chadleigh, they joined the duke's guests two days before Christmas Eve. Lady Theodosia Thynne rode with her father to meet her future connections at the station. She had not inherited her mother's talents and graces. She was quite an ordinary young lady, dressed well, had a sallow complexion, had been perfectly well brought up, and engaged, by a sort of family arrangement, since she was fifteen years old, to a cousin of her own, on the mother's side. She had never had any temptation, either from temperament or circumstances, to indulge in flirtation, and she had a great horror of, as well as some curiosity about, the genus "flirt."

"I am longing to see this pretty *fiancée* of Gerald's papa," she said, as she rode along by her side through the muddy lanes, with her habit abominably splashed.

Lady Theodosia had been at Mentone with her sister-in-law when Claris had been introduced to her family.

"Pretty!" echoed the duke; "that's not half strong enough, my dear. She's a lovely creature."

"And the sister, papa?"

"A nice little thing—very. Looks out of health, though. You must take special charge of her, Theo."

Theo's correct upper lip curled. She had to be careful, though, for the duke was, as a rule, very intolerant of what he called "ladies' scandal."

"I should say she is better now, papa. I heard of her on the Rhine, amusing herself with a Colonel St. Maur."

"Eh—what?" cried her father, who was not exactly listening. "Engaged to Colonel St. Maur, did you say?"

"No; I did not understand quite *that*," hastily corrected Lady Theodosia; "but she has some sort of fancy for him, or he for her."

"'Pon my honor, I am very glad to hear it."

The duke was thoroughly good-natured; he liked to see everybody about him happy, and as he had observed that love affairs and engagements went a long way towards the apparent attainment of this end, he took as lively an interest in all such matters as Miss Hetty or any lady gossip of his acquaintance, and he held certain latitudinarian views "thereanent," from which his family could not succeed in converting him, although Theo did make another effort to set the orthodoxy of the thing before him.

"But, papa," she explained, "you don't understand; it's not at all a good thing."

"Why not?" questioned her father; "the fellow's well-bred—first cousin to Lord Openshaw—a very agreeable man, too; remember I met him at Cliefden last year. The ladies seemed to think him handsome, and if this little girl thinks so too, and likes him, why shouldn't she marry him?"

"But, papa, you would not have people marry without a proper income and position, would you? Colonel St. Maur is not an eligible match; he is not— I don't know what he is, but he is a younger son's younger son, you know, and—"

Theo was quoting, you see, and her friend Elaine had not been very lucid as to the colonel's disabilities; she had merely knocked him off as generally disadvantageous, in order to swell the measure of poor Olive's delinquencies.

The duke laughed.

"It seems to me that this man is as eligible, according to your own showing, Theo, as your cousin Gerald is for the other sister."

"Oh, papa, but Gerald is one of *us*."

"Tut, tut, child—and St. Maur is one of another *us*; and if he were not, and the girl liked him, I don't see the harm. If I were Queen of England, or, still better, Pope of Rome, Theo, I would bring in a 'Marriage Emancipation Bill.' Everybody should fall in love and marry just when, where, and whom they liked, and the more the better. There's nothing like matrimony. Good morning, Homfray."

This to a horseman—the cousin before-men-

tioned—who rode up on the other side of the hedge at the same moment.

"Good morning, my lord," was the laughing reply. "What a rabid matrimonialist you are! Where do you draw the line, may I ask?"

"At bigamy, Homfray," stoutly replied the duke; "nowhere short of it, I assure you."

Theo blushed a little, as a well-brought-up girl ought to do at such an allusion; but Lord Homfray and she were much too well accustomed to their position to be guilty of any unnecessary embarrassment at this sudden meeting. He asked, and she told him, as they rode along, the commencement and meaning of the conversation he had interrupted.

"St. Maur?" he repeated. "Yes—clever fellow that—great gun with the ladies—perfectly irresistible, in fact. So he's caught at last, is he? Well, I'm glad of it."

In despair at the crookedness of apprehension which made both her father and her lover take such wrong views of the subject, Lady Theodosia, who was not good at an explanation, left it alone.

She sat looking over at Olive, who was the the first to make her appearance in the drawing-room before dinner, and she decided that there was something nice about her. If she had not known of that unfortunate propensity for flirting, she might have liked her, she was so quiet and self-possessed, and such bright lights flitted over her face at times, as she talked to the duke about the stereoscopic views of Switzerland which he was showing her.

Lady Theodosia was quite ordinary in most things, but she had inherited something of her father's true perception of the beautiful. She recognized, in spite of herself, the classical grace of the exquisite head, with its rich, dark hair gathered back from the "sweet low" brows, and held by a silver arrow in coils that seemed almost too heavy, for the support of the delicate little throat.

Lady Theodosia crossed the room and joined her father. There was an attraction about this creature, dangerous as she believed it, that made her curious to examine it, under proper protection, just as she would, at safe distance and from behind a due security of iron bars, have studied the handsome rings of a boa-constrictor, or the bright glistening skin of a cobra da capello. The "creature" was worth a study just then; she was talking, describing that sunset view from the Righi, moved thereto by some impetus given by her entertainer's kindred enthusiasm, and carried now out of herself beyond the self-protecting instinct which taught her to keep such intense feelings safely under watch and ward. Her whole face glowed, her large eyes deepened as she spoke. The duke was listening, and expressing his interest by sundry approving, delighted nods. Olive caught Lady Theodosia's eyes fixed wonderingly upon her, and stopped suddenly; the spell was broken, for Theo's eyes said as plainly as possible—

"What an odd person!"

She was not used to such bursts of enthusiastic feeling; she did not feel as if they were proper. There was something theatrical about them; they savored too much of professional or public characters to be becoming. Theo did not feel comfortable in the society of young ladies who talked poetry.

The duke glanced at his watch, then round the empty room.

"Only half-past seven," he said; "I shall have time, Miss Banker, before the ladies have finished their toilette, to show you something which I keep for such as you."

He led the way to the library, calling for lights as he went. There he lifted a heavy portfolio on to the table, unlocked it, and brought out some exquisitely-finished water-color drawings, his own, and gems in their way. He placed them, one by one, on the stand before Olive, adjusting the lights to their proper position, and pointing out the peculiar beauties of each. Her face was an ovation, to say nothing of the half cry of delight with which she greeted a lovely view of the Interlachen valley, which happened to be his own favorite. He was quite as sorry as she was that the dinner-gong hurried the sketches back again into their portfolio, not, however, before a very important point was gained.

"There's something in that little girl," he said to himself, as he sought out Miss Ursula in the drawing-room; "she has taste and discrimination. She's a nice little thing—a *very* nice little thing. I must see into this love affair of hers, and help it on, if it can be done."

But Arlingford was full of Christmas guests, and what with business and pleasure, the duke's time was fully occupied. It was not until a week afterwards that he found leisure to de-develope his kindly scheme for prospering the loves of the thwarted pair. He caught Claris, after luncheon, on a snowy day, when everybody was compelled to be contented within doors with billiards and bagatelle and such-like idle resources, and, linking her arm within his, led her away to his private room, and sat her down there in the midst of papers, and accounts, and parliamentary reports, and committee minutes, and all sorts of business litter. Then he locked the door upon the conference.

"My dear," he began, "there is no getting a moment of quiet in this noisy house. I wanted to tell you that that matter of Gerald's is settled. I got the definitive promise yesterday."

He held up a note, sealed with a coronated crest, but kept it between his fingers.

"He comes home in June, doesn't he? Well, the thing will be ready and waiting for him, tell him. I leave you the pleasure of announcing it."

He scarcely waited for her murmured thanks.

"And now for this St. Maur business; how does it stand?"

He was so fully occupied with his own helping projects and interest that he forgot until he had plunged fairly into it that it was a somewhat delicate matter. The burning blush which fired Claris's cheek recalled as much to his mind. He stammered, apologised, then remembered that he was fairly in for it, and that, instead of floundering about in this awkward fashion, it would be best to dash through with it at once and get it over. One beginning, perhaps, was as good as another, after all, so he went on—

"Of course," he premised, smilingly, "this is confidential between you and me. There is an attachment, I conclude?"

Claris was quite self-possessed again by this time.

"He" (the duke) "was so good," she said, with a little hesitation. "Well, she would admit there *was* an attachment, a very decided feeling on both sides; but this was, of course, perfectly confidential" (looking alarmed.) "Her aunt—"

The duke understood. She might depend upon him, entirely. He was quite pleased. There was a pleasant sensation about this little mystery—quite a romantic flavor—and looking down upon that Raphaelesque head, and those innocent, clear, blue eyes which were looking up so appealingly into his, the duke felt like the good genius of a fairy tale who had come to redress lovers' wrongs, and set persecuted princesses free, and make everybody happy again "as long as they lived." He set his back against the mantelpiece, and spread out his coat-tails, and saw the whole thing quite plainly.

"He remembered meeting the colonel last year," he said; "was certainly prepossessed in his favor. Homfray knew him too—good-looking fellow, fascinating manners, clever too, he should say. Want of settled position the only objection Miss Armytage made, he supposed; was there any other?"

"Oh, no," Claris interrupted eagerly, "none whatever, but the colonel had long expected such advancement as would place him beyond the fear of her aunt's—her family's objection. He surely deserved something of the country: his services had been considerable, but his party had been long out of power."

"Yes, yes," the duke observed; "the Openshaw family were always stanch Tories. Well, our turn has come now. But what about services? I believe I have already heard of them." He turned and reached *Hart's Army List* from a shelf behind him.

"Hum—Crimea, Inkermann, Balaklava, Sebastopol, Victoria Cross, Legion of Honor. India, Chillianwallah, and Goojerat. Medal and two clasps. Delhi in '57. Upon my word, a brilliant list. We owe something more than half pay to such a man. The thing is, what is he fit for? The right man in the right place. You know, a fellow may fight well, and yet be good at nothing but fighting—can't keep him always at it, though. Stop! this will do."

He sat down to his writing-table, and dashed off a note, which he handed to her:—

"Dear Sir,—The slight nature of our acquaintance would scarcely warrant my asking the pleasure of your company at Arlingford for a few days, were we not just now favored by the visit of mutual friends whom it may be agreeable to you to meet under our roof. The duchess joins me in kind compliments, and in the expression of the pleasure it will give us to receive so distinguished an officer as yourself, should your other engagements permit you to join us.—I am, dear sir, very truly yours,

"Arlingford.

"Colonel St. Maur."

"So," said the duke, complacently, folding the note into an envelope, "now for the address."

Claris suggested the "Army and Navy Club." She remembered perfectly, she said, that Colonel St. Maur had requested them to address to him there, *apropos* of some little commissions he had undertaken for Miss Armytage. The duke addressed the envelope, fastened it down, and placed the letter in the post-bag, which hung by his table.

"Now, Miss Claris," he said, "this is to be our secret, if you please. Not a word to any one. A premature disclosure might neutralize the whole affair. You may trust me—in good time—all in good time, you know—to carry it well through. I will not debar you, though, from a hint or two, very carefully and judiciously administered, just to keep up hope. I can trust you, I believe; you have shown so much zeal in the cause."

He was brimming over with good-natured self-satisfaction, he was managing this affair, nice and difficult as it was, so well; and he could see his way pretty clearly to a triumphant consummation. It was enough to put a man in good humor with himself and all the world.

Claris hung upon his arm, pressing it with both her pretty white hands, and looking up into his face in a charming access of gratitude.

"How good you are!" she said. "You have made me so happy! Ah, how pleasant it must be to have power, the power of doing so much good! I wish I had been born a man."

This was a favorite stroke of Claris's; it opened up such a wide range of gallant protest and well-turned compliment.

The duke accepted the challenge.

"Miss Claris, from her own point of view," he said, "was better as she was. Some women had more power than some kings and emperors. Were he seeking power, and were he the most mighty king that had ever reigned, he would be content to-morrow to exchange his crown and sceptre for Beauty's all-potent wand. Was it possible that Miss Claris was ignorant of the power she possessed? If so, for the safety and welfare of mankind, the sooner she realized it the better; such a chariot of fire driven heedlessly through the world might set it in a blaze." And so on until they had crossed the marble hall and joined a group of ladies making believe to do needlework in the drawing-room. The duke, wonderfully elated still, sat himself down in the midst of them, and talked nonsense, in the same strain, until the dressing-bell dispersed the industrious party.

It was on the evening of the third day after this interview that Claris lounged into her sister's room. She was full-dressed for a large dinner-party which was to take place that night. That Claris should be, at any time, ready before the proper hour was such an unusual circumstance that Olive, who sat still by the fire reading, looked up in surprise. Her sister answered the glance by a laugh.

"Yes," she said, "I can see you hardly believe it; nevertheless it is I in the flesh, as well as in all the splendor of the dear old duke's pearls, and in my most favorite Parisian toilette. How do you like it—the dress I mean?"

It was a beautiful dress of blue and silver, and, with the wreath of silver-leaved white chrysanthemums tied with blue ribbons which completed it, received its due tribute of admiration from Olive, whose philosophy was by no means proof against the lighter feminine vanities.

"And now for you," Claris said, when she had been sufficiently admired. "I came to look after your dress. I want you to be very charming to-night. What are you wearing? Oh, not this," touching a light skirt of some white gauzy material which was spread out upon the bed. "Let me dress you for once."

"You must be quick, then," smiled Olive, "for I have come to the last moment of my time; fifteen minutes only before the gong sounds."

It was pleasant to be petted and made much of by Claris, and she yielded to it very readily.

"Your hair is done, I see," said Claris, drawing one dress after another out of the wardrobe; "and I guess your feet are provided for. '*Chaussée* and *coiffée*,' you know, Marguerite used to say, 'and nothing much remains to be done—the worst is over.' This is what I was looking for."

She spread out a white silk dress.

"Now then for flowers. Stay, there are some in my room."

She came back with a bouquet of white and rose-colored azaleas, and an exquisite little cross of pink coral.

"Now you are ready," she said, fixing the last pin with her own hands, and surveying her work with great satisfaction. "Just look at yourself, and tell me if I have not got you up beautifully."

But Olive refused to look.

"I will take your word for it," she said, laughing. "There is no time for vanity."

She picked up her handkerchief and gloves, whilst Claris brought up a rose-colored burnous from the wardrobe and laid it on her shoulders. They went down stairs together, talking and laughing as they went. It was always now so pleasant to Olive to find any ground upon which she and Claris could meet. The time had been when, recognizing fully the wide gap which yawned between them, she had made no effort to bridge it over, but had rather prided herself upon the distance. Now that suffering had brought self-knowledge and humility, that distance seemed to her to have diminished wonderfully. Not that Claris's standing-point had altered—she was too true-sighted to think that—but in the deep sense of her own weakness she had gained that sympathy which brought her nearer to the imperfections of her sister's character.

There was quite a little crowd of guests within the drawing-room door as the sisters entered. The duke turned from a group of gentlemen to whom he was talking, and taking Claris at once on his arm, presented her to those about him, whilst all the time he held Olive in his other hand. She stood quietly a step behind him, waiting patiently until these introductions should be finished, or until an opportunity should be given her of joining the ladies, whom she could see beyond the little mob of gentlemen gathered about the fireplace. The door opened behind her, and Lady Theodosia rustled in. Just then a little movement took place in the crowd, and the duke spoke in his most courteous tones to some one who had thus been brought to the front.

"Colonel St. Maur, permit me to present you to my daughter; and I believe there is a young lady whose acquaintance you have already made—Miss Bankes."

Olive was horribly vexed with herself that she was not able to restrain a start of surprise, or to command the quick blood which mounted at once into her cheeks.

Lady Theodosia, whose eyes were fixed upon her, could not know how disagreeable was the sensation which produced such results. Her cheeks burned more and more in her impatience of such untimely embarrassment. Was this man ubiquitous? or else how was it that he was here? She had certainly never heard him spoken of as amongst the friends of the family. She was so flurried that she scarcely knew how she reached the other side of the long room, only she found herself presently seated there, with Lady Theodosia by her side, studying her with very undisguised interest. Theo was stupid, and she had, besides, an unpleasant way of plunging at once, *in medias res*.

"Colonel St. Maur is a friend of *yours*!" she asked—"he has never been here before."

"No; hardly a friend of mine—" Olive hesitated, vexed that she did so. "He is an acquaintance of my family."

"I thought," Theo persisted, stupidly determined on going to the bottom of the matter, and doing it very badly, "I thought you had seen a great deal of him."

"He travelled with us this autumn," Olive said, more firmly.

"He is handsome," Lady Theodosia ventured; "is he agreeable?"

"He is clever and well-informed," replied Olive, now quite at her ease; "we found his knowledge of the Continent a great assistance to us."

"Yes, no doubt you would." Theo threw so much meaning into these words that she brought the color—*this* time a blush of indignation—back into Olive's face.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Scientific Comfort for Cooks.

The Springfield Weekly Republican states that all good housewifes assert that there are times when their "ovens won't bake," an assertion always received with incredulity and disgust by Paterfamilias, when he finds his roast half done and the under crust of his pies like so much paste; for he is sure *he* could make it bake. But the women seem to have the right of it, though few of them could explain the fact scientifically, as Professor Horsford tried to do at the scientific meeting at Buffalo last week, in a paper on the "effect of sunshine on fire;"—"As regards the draft of chimneys, the speaker found, during the late heated term, that neither meats nor bread could be baked in his kitchen-range between the hours of twelve and three. Investigating the causes, he concluded them to be due to the column of heated air rising from the walls and slated roof of the house, which, by friction, drew out from windows and crevices the air in the interior, which would otherwise supply the draft of the chimney; and also produced a counter current of air flowing across the opening of the chimneys above, pressing upon the column of air rising through them. The professor's conclusions, generally stated, were that sunshine or light has no direct effect upon combustion, and that the effects from which the notion arises are due to incidental causes, as partially indicated in this brief synopsis of his remarks."

Odd Ideas.—Von Helmont tells us that Adam was created without a beard, but that after he had fallen and sinned, because of the sinful propensities which he derived from the fruit of the forbidden tree, a beard was made part of his punishment and his disgrace, bringing him thus into nearer resemblance with the beasts towards whom he made his nature approximate. The same stigma was not inflicted upon Eve, because even in the fall she retained much of her original modesty, and therefore deserved no such opprobrious mark. Von Helmont observes, also, that no good angel ever appears with a beard; and this, he says, is a capital sign by which angels may be distinguished.

☞ Evil for Good.—Sidney Tompkins, a wealthy farmer in Stillwater, N. Y., was trying to get a potato from the gullet of a choking cow, when she caught him on her horns, threw him in the air—when he fell on a fence and was killed.

SATURDAY EVENING POST.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, DEC'R. 22, 1856.

OUR NOVELETS, CLUBS, &c.

We call attention to the new Novelet, named

HEARTS ERRANT,

which we have every reason to believe will give great satisfaction to our readers. Lady readers, especially, will admire it.

We design commencing a new novelet by Mr. Bennett in the first paper of the next year. It will be called

THE OUTLAW'S DAUGHTER;

A TALE OF THE SOUTHWEST.

We trust those who intend making up clubs for the new year, will begin at once, before their friends are engaged for other periodicals.

No paper offers as great inducements as The Post. Besides, as The Post and the Lady's Friend can always be clubbed together, it makes the getting up of large lists much easier than where there is no choice. Many persons will also take both periodicals, and thus count for two subscriptions.

We return our thanks to the host of old friends who have stood by us for years, and hope to continue to make The Post in every way worthy of their support. And if it comes in their way occasionally to recommend our sheet to their friends and neighbors, we shall duly appreciate the kindness.

To Correspondents.—"Our Governess" is declined.

OUR PREMIUMS.

Mrs. C. H. Hopkins, of Rider's Mills, New York, says:—

"I write to inform you that the Sewing Machine is at hand; also the Engravings, which came with the papers. The Machine is an excellent one, and in perfect order; for which please accept my sincere thanks. I will endeavor to increase your number of subscribers as much as possible."

Miss Jeannie L. Corey, of Almond, New York, writes as follows:—

"I hasten to acknowledge the receipt of the 'perfect little beauty,' as so many pronounce it, which you have had the kindness to award me, for my services in getting subscribers for your worthy magazine and paper. For this beautiful gold watch, accept my most sincere thanks, and know that I feel amply repaid for the exertion I made to assist you. It has every appearance of being in a perfect condition, and has run nicely ever since I received it."

THE ARABS.

It might be asked, are deserts ever fruitful? yet the barren sands of Arabia have proved more prolific than many of the most fertile soils—fruitful in human thought and action, that richest of harvests. A race of fierce nomads, half banditti, half camel-drivers, have exerted an influence upon the world of which the most favored nation might be proud.

For ages they peopled their desert plain in savage indifference to the world without, while the great civilizations of Greece and Rome rose and declined, and till centuries after Christianity had made its appearance. Then in some strange way this people became infected with a vital idea. Despite the absurdities with which Mohammed surrounded his central doctrine, that dogma of the Unity of God swept aside the vague idolatry of the Arabs. Then appeared a remarkable example of a creed changing the whole character of a people, who, from being irreligious barbarians, suddenly became proselyting bigots, and from the confines of their scarcely known country precipitated themselves on the surrounding nations, sword and Koran in hand, with the single alternative of conversion or extermination.

Fighting under the full belief that death ensured Paradise, and with an earnest singleness of purpose that had its due effect, their creed rapidly superseded the various theologies of the conquered races. The doctrines of Islamism spread with a rapidity unexampled in human history, till from the confines of Persia to the Atlantic coast of Spain the power of the Caliphs extended; and though their political influence has long since declined, their creed has yet more disciples than Christianity.

But leaving the theological aspect, we may glance at the influence of the Arabs on the intellectual progress of mankind. At present we behold them sunk far below the level of the Christian nations. Ten centuries ago this state of things was reversed, and, while Europe lay in the profound mental gloom of the "Dark Ages," the court of Bagdad shone with a noble light of civilization. A highly-cultivated literature, excellent schools, scientific progress, a brilliant court, and a magnificent city, were the effects of the liberal and enlightened policy of the Caliphs, whose fame penetrated so far through the darkness of the West that we find the proud Charlemagne sending embassadors to Haroun Alrascbid, the most celebrated of these rulers.

In Egypt, though a warlike bigot is accused of burning the Alexandrian Library, it is certain that they gave to literature and science that protection which Ecclesiasticism had denied. Under their rule there were no murdered Hypatias, but with a wise tolerance they extended inducements to the learned men of all nations, and did much towards restoring the ancient prestige of Alexandria. Among their contributions to human knowledge we may mention the mathematical sciences of arithmetic and algebra, the chemical discoveries of nitric and sulphuric acids, and we might instance much more of importance in medical and chemical science.

In Spain the enlightenment of the Saracens was yet more apparent, because in more immediate contrast with the ignorance of Christian Europe. While Paris and London were yet unpaved and unlighted, cities where the people dwelt in hovels, the nobles and kings in strongholds whose strength was the main consideration, comfort a matter of minor importance, Saracenic Cordova had its miles of paved and lighted streets, its palaces of magnificent architecture and luxurious surroundings, its schools to which all Europe sent scholars, and its Savans whose teachings gave the first incentive to intellectual progress in Europe. Reservoirs of old science, and originators of much new thought and invention, by their influence they set in train that grand march of science which has so long outlived them; and when, as they became enervated by peace and distracted by faction, Spain drove them over the seas, she only insured her own reign of bigotry, but could not erase the indelible mark they had left on the mind of Europe.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

A Reply Issued to a Pamphlet issued by the Assistant Secretary of the Navy in Favor of League Island, showing the Vastly Superior Advantages of the Site on the Thames River, near New London, for a Navy Yard for Iron Clad Vessels. With a brief comment on the Course of the Secretary of the Navy on this Question. Published by the New London Navy Yard Committee. Our New London friends do not seem to be willing to give up the Navy Yard yet. Meanwhile, Philadelphia has the iron-clads.

Poems by Edgar Allen Poe. Complete. With an Original Memoir. Published by W. J. Widdleton, N. Y.; and also for sale by J. B. Lippincott & Co., Phila. Price $3 25. This is a handsome and complete edition of Poe's poems, illustrated with a portrait, &c. The paper and print are excellent—and the volume well suited for a Christmas present.

The Titusville Suicide.

Some time since it was announced that a man at Titusville, Pennsylvania, committed suicide for the strange reason that he had discovered he was his own grandfather. Leaving a dying statement, explaining this singular circumstance, we will not attempt to unravel it, but give his explanation of the mixed-up condition of his kinsfolk in his own words. He says:—"I married a widow who had a grown-up daughter. My father visited our house very often, fell in love with my step-daughter and married her. So my father became my son-in-law, and my step-daughter my mother, because she was my father's wife. Some time afterwards my wife had a son; he was my father's brother-in-law, and my uncle, for he was the brother of my step-mother. My father's wife—i. e, my step-daughter—had also a son; he was, of course, my brother, and in the meantime my grandchild, for he was the son of my daughter. My wife was my grandmother, because she was my mother's mother. I was my wife's husband and grandchild at the same time. And as the husband of a person's grandmother is his grandfather, I was my own grandfather." That this was a strange condition of things must be confessed, but we can see no possible reason why it should cause a man to commit suicide.

Fertilizing the Sahara.—The London Scientific Review says: "This vast desert, whitened by the bones of so many unfortunate travellers who have at various times perished on its inhospitable sands, is likely, before many ages, to be changed into a rich and beautiful country. The only cause of its sterility has been the absence of water. This will ultimately be supplied by means of the artesian wells in the utmost abundance. Every day new cases are produced by the multiplication of these wells, which supply vast quantities of water."

Are Stimulants Necessary?—The "model village of Scorton," situated between Lancaster and Preston, England, which contains neither a public house nor a beer shop, has just been subjected to a fearful scourge in the shape of typhus fever. During the past nine or ten weeks the epidemic has been raging with more or less virulence. There have been eighty cases and ten deaths. Are stimulants necessary—or is the drainage bad?

Horseman, spare that tree!
'Tis not a hitching post;
Though in its infancy,
Yet soon 'twill shade a host.
Then spare, oh, spare that tree,
For he who placed it there
Meant not that it should be
By beast of thine gnawed bare.

☞ Dangerous.—An inquest was held at Horley, England, on the body of William Shelton, a laborer, aged twenty-one. The deceased had been amusing himself with various trials of strength, the last of which was the holding of a chair at arm's length. He succeeded in accomplishing the feat for a few minutes, but immediately afterward complained of excessive pain, and expired. The exertion, it appeared, had caused the rupture of a blood-vessel, and the jury returned a verdict to that effect.

☞ Quilp thinks it rather remarkable that while several thousand feet are required to make one rood, a single foot, properly applied, is often sufficient to make one civil.

☞ The coast of Maine, with all its indentations, is longer than the Atlantic cable.

☞ Mr. Bright, in one of his late speeches, said that one-half of Scotland is owned by twelve persons, and one half of England by one hundred and fifty.

☞ A sprightly New York critic says of Ristori's acting:—"Her lips curl back from here teeth in a white horror, and she seems to lap Creusa's blood with delirious joy." That must have been "pretty" to see.

☞ Prentice says the late failure of the expected exhibition of shooting stars wasn't owing to the want of stars. There were enough of them, but they were too peaceable to shoot.

☞ Don't touch the lute when drums are resounding. A wise man remains silent when fools are speaking.

☞ An exchange advises gentlemen not to part their hair behind, for "hair parted in that way reveals a soft place in the head."

☞ See that each hour's feelings and thoughts and actions are pure and true; then will your life be such. The wide pasture is but separate spires of grass; the sheeted bloom of the prairies but isolated flowers.

☞ Artemus Ward says that, as a Son of Temperance, he believes in temperance hotels, though as a general thing they sell poorer liquor than the other sort.

☞ The newest thing in the scientific world is cat's milk. Some *great* London chemist has discovered that it is powerfully restorative and invigorating.

South American Civilization.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY COSMO.

SOME COMPARISONS—QUEER COMPUTATION—A NEW WORLD—MUTE ADMIRATION—VULGAR INTERRUPTION—GOING TO DINNER—AN ANDEAN REPAST.

Leaving out of the account that northern portion of New Granada embracing the inter-oceanic railroad route, and so much of the Republic of the Rio de la Plata as is inhabited by hordes of roving Guachos, and Bolivia lies lowest in the scale of civilization of all Spanish American countries south of the continental dividing line. We had encountered elsewhere often enough ignorance, idolatry, cruelty and caprice, blended with brutal barbarism, that raised so frequently in our minds the question that it finally became a conviction that a stroke of Omnipotent power that should sweep the entire continent, from Darien to Terra del Fargo, of every vestige of the degenerate races inhabiting it, making place for a new and higher order of humanity, would be a dispensation by which the world would be benefited and the cause of universal civilization advanced. But it was only in Bolivia we argued that judgment and execution should have been simultaneous—pronounced and consummated two centuries ago. Depopulated at that period, there doubtless would have been a better Bolivia open to the world and of some benefit to it to-day.

But low as the standard of Bolivian civilization is, it is not all barbarism and beastliness. No desert is without an oasis, no landscape so forbidding that there cannot be found in it some pleasing feature. So in less than semi-civilized Bolivia we found several exceptions to the general rule of mental darkness and physical degradation. Brightest and most beautiful among all these exceptions is the magnificent valley plane, and its population, which we found in an isolated world in the heart of the Andes, stretching in gently undulating beauty over a distance of twenty leagues north and south between the bases of Illimani and Sorata, sloping gently to the eastward about the same distance, until the slope meets the banks of the beautiful Beni, a branch of the great Madeira, which is itself the largest tributary of the mighty Amazon. Beyond the Beni the landscape, changing somewhat its valley and forest features, unites with the great, almost limitless meadow plains of interior and eastern Bolivia, continuing an unbroken domain of tropical magnificence until it meets the western base of the Geral Range and the frontiers of the great Brazilian Empire.

Our present purpose is an attempt at delineating a few of the features of that portion of the vast tropical diorama lying westward of the river Beni and between the two grand old volcanic mountain sovereigns, Sorata and Illimani—*El Val de Dulce*. A more appropriate name its Spanish sponsor could not have bestowed upon the territory. A sweet valley it is, and most magnificently beautiful, mingling in its native features all the loveliness that made the first Eden a Paradise, and leaving out of the catalogue the unlucky apple, it is probable that the *Val de Dulce* of the Andes has a fruit list at this day quite equal to that of the "garden eastward in Eden," of which our great grand parents were earliest and sole proprietors. Certainly we had never before seen in any country such profusion and variety; such perfection and promiscuous mingling of Pomona's tropical and temperate bounty. Peaches and pomegranates, grapes and guavas, oranges, cherries, currants and cocoanuts, pears and pine apples, plums and *pepanos*, plantains, apricots, lemons, figs, and of all the smaller fruits, somewhat answering in kind to each of ours in the northern hemisphere and equally as good, while of flowers the varieties were endless, profusion astonishing and of beauty unrivalled in the world's flora.

There is an immense amount of nature's bounty lavished on nothing, taking together the tropical regions of South America; but here, in this happy valley, lying lovingly in the lap of the mighty Andes, nature nurtures a family of humanity, beasts and birds, peculiarly her own and for whom she provides with more than motherly care. Here nature never sleeps, and "nature's children all divide her care," at least all of them that live within the limits of *el Val de Dulce*, and counting all, the family is certainly an extensive one. From the river Beni westward between the two great fire peaks to where the range begins to rise, forming the elevated plateau and great basin of Lake Titticaca, it is thought there are twenty thousand human inhabitants, though in the last census of the country the statistical officials, who guess at conclusions in everything, thereby saving themselves much labor, jot down the population in round numbers at seven hundred *almas* (souls.) As there may possibly be somewhere in the neighborhood of that count of men, women and children in all the valley claiming unmingled blood, it is probable that they only have been taken into the account, and that in the estimation of the census *cuents* the remaining nineteen thousand, more or less, are samples of soulless humanity.

Taught by experience, we very soon became dissenters from the opinions of the Bolivian officials, and a month's acquaintance with the people of *Val de Dulce*, of all classes and conditions, satisfied us that individually and collectively there were more souls by enumeration, and in the aggregate more *soul* than we had ever found in an equal number of human beings anywhere else, either in South America or out of it. But let us get first fairly into the valley before taking in hand the characteristics of the Dulcians.

Leaving behind us the great bamboo region, and having traversed the belt of forest jungle country northward and eastward of it, we broke cover one fine morning some two hours after sunrise upon a scene so enchantingly sublime and magnificently beautiful, that unsentimental Bohemians as we were, simultaneously every man and woman of us drew rein and gazed in mute admiration that in itself was very ecstacy upon a new world so variedly beautiful in its thousand features of blended harmony, that the eye was powerless to individualize, and admiration itself was half veiled in wonder.

Before and so far beneath us that we looked down upon it as upon an unrolled map, lay the lovely valley, pleasingly variegated with green and gold, in foliage and ripened grain, divided by eccentric belts of silver, as glancing in the sunlight, rivulets and rivers flowed through meandering channels to mingle far away their crystal currents with that of the Beni. In the fore ground white walls and red roofs of pleasant homes, cosily sheltered and shaded by waving palms, green lanes of plantains and bananas, fields of maize, wheat and millet, with here and there darker patches of verdure marking the presence of the indigo plant along the water courses, fields of waving rice, herds of sheep, llamas, many vicunas and a few horned cattle and horses, with humanity busily moving to and fro in all directions, made up a fore ground of a diorama beautiful beyond description; the gorgeous picture, softening and blending in the distance its individual features into a harmonious whole, diminished, indistinct, but lovely still in its veiled beauty.

Behind us towered the "Heart of the Andes," grand old giant Illimani, belted with everlasting snow, gleaming in the brilliant sunlight, while sending up from his summit a dense column of sulphurous vapor, in opaque fantastic wreaths, imagination required no spur to make of the volcanic monster a mighty altar upon which burned continually the incense of a subterranean world to the great source of light—the Inca's tutelar deity.

In the northwest, further off, rose Sorato, its head and half way down its rugged sides enveloped in an Andean snow storm, the clouds black as Egyptian midnight. To the eastward the lovely valley plain swept away in gently undulating waves of verdure, darkening first in the general blending, and then growing gradually into a soft purple haze, fading dimmer in the distance to where earth and sky met, limiting the range of vision.

And when we had noted all these features of our new world and worshipped a long time in silence, Cator, the cormorant, broke the enchantment in a way that earned for himself several instantaneous blessings of the left-handed sort, the sharpest and severest of which came from our religious little Queen of Naples. Cator rapped out as abruptly and out of tune as the bray of a donkey:

"Hallos; I say, seven bells! What's the sense in sitting here dreaming of beauty afar off? Let us go down and in among it and get dinner."

"Cator, you are a salt-water heathen! The Bolivians may count you among the soulless."

"Don't care two *medios* what else they count me, Miss Fiorietta; but you may bet all the port side of those pretty curls, they'll never count me supperless or dinnerless, with so many good things in reach as there are down ahead there. I say, shipmates; I'm getting hungry. Who says fresh eggs, fried plantain, peaches and llama cream for din—?"

A rapid rattle of *Js* interrupted the sea lion. Even our little Neapolitan put in her ready assent, and was the first to put to spurs—the mention of fresh eggs, fried plantain, &c., having in a wink changed the current of her enthusiasm into a new channel.

So we went down, and into the valley, and began to make acquaintances among the people that the Bolivians up at Chuquisaca count as nothing—having no souls. Now *soul*, and a great deal of it, was the first commodity that we found among the people of *el Val de Dulce*. Then we found such a dinner as not a hotel in any civilized country upon the face of the earth could have supplied at so brief a notice.

Within two miles from the point at which we entered the valley proper, we rode into a sort of town, if a settlement in which there were perhaps a hundred houses, each sheltering ten persons on an average, and dispersed over an area of two miles, may be designated as a town. Our reception was the oddest, quietest, and most civil one we had ever experienced anywhere. Of the fourscore dogs that came out to reconnoitre us, not a dog barked, growled, or in any manner behaved in the least like an illbred cur. Of the hundred or more men, women and children that we encountered, not one of them stared, ran away, or in any manner exhibited a single mark of rudeness, as people more savage or civilized would have done. But upon introducing ourselves, and explaining who and what we were, a great many men and women, and even half-grown girls and boys said:—"You are all most welcome!" and said it with such an air of earnest sincerity, that there was no doubt that we were going to be very much at home with the Dulcians at once and during our sojourn among them.

Next after having assured us that we were welcome, the question came from all quarters:—"What will the senoras and senors be pleased to have for dinner?"

That was early hospitality indeed. Invited to dinner by total strangers before our feet were out of the stirrups. Not to be behind hand with our new friends, Cator assumed the responsibility of general representative on our side, and answered the question as frankly as it was put: "*Qual cousa quera*," which seemed to be satisfactory and to cover the whole question of entertainment. Forthwith a great many movements were made in many directions, all conducive to our comfortable reception. The females, old and young, suddenly disappeared quietly, as if some signal given, unseen by us, by some one but intelligible to them, had dispersed them on various errands of busy preparation.

Several young men came forward and assisted our senoras from saddle as respectfully polite as the best bred ladies' man living anywhere, numerous urchins led away our horses to pasture, while a committee of very respectable-looking old men taking us in charge conducted us to a sort of public pavilion, open at the sides, located in a grove of palm trees, and made a magnificent arbor by a profusion of grape and other vines, all profusely ladened with luscious fruit and lovely flowers. In the centre was an extensive table, unique in form, being shaped like a great capital S, and by the time we had made our ablutions and toilettes, to which end everything requisite was provided, the women, girls and boys, began to come in on all sides and from all directions, bringing such a variety of made and cooked dishes, and ripe, tempting fruits as we had never seen at an entertainment before. As if Cator's first love had been understood and anticipated, there were conspicuous broad dishes of fried plantains and bananas; eggs, boiled, poached, fried, scrambled and frittered into a rich creamy froth, with small, fat fish, less than the sardine, first boned, and broiled delicately brown. Then there were meats—lamb, llama, vicuna, and veal, cooked in every possible style, all palatable and good; fowls, from the motherly hen, smothered in rich surroundings sitting on a nest of new-laid eggs smothered with her, down through all grades of chickendom to the sweet morsel of a chick broiled, and tender as a pullet sparrow. In the vegetable course there were yams, potatoes, pumpkins, cucumbers, and a dozen varieties unknown on North American or European tables, all capitally and curiously cooked, or made in divers ways delicious.

In the dessert that followed the sumptuous impromptu dinner, all the fruits of the tropical world and many of the temperate zones were present, most inviting among the legion being dishes of luscious strawberries—red, yellow, and white, smothered in the rich, delicately flavored cream of the llama.

Thus, in little more than an hour from our first setting foot in the valley, we were sitting before such a repast as probably no other portion of the globe could produce, and no other people under Heaven provide and set out in such unexceptionable style at such brief notice.

WASHINGTON'S GENERALS.

A NEW AND COMPENDIOUS HISTORY.

AFTER THE MANNER OF M. ERNEST RENAN.

History in its true conception is neither a chronicle stuffed with facts, nor a chronology bristling with dates. Hence the loftiest style of history—the philosophical and critical—eschews facts and dates altogether.

I, myself, have a sublime contempt for facts and dates. I reconstruct the Past from the slenderest remains of the Present by the aid of the Historical Imagination; and I do it as easily as Agassiz reconstructs an antediluvian monster from a fossil jaw-bone, or produces an accurate drawing of an extinct fish from a single scale.

One great advantage of my style of writing history is, that it saves a world of trouble both to author and reader. The former is relieved from the necessity of poring over musty records and antiquated authorities, while the latter absorbs learning by a process as agreeable as the perusal of M. Hugo's last novel.

The history of Washington's Generals rests mainly upon tradition. None of them have written their own histories; hence the accounts we have are more or less apocryphal. Tradition knows only heroes and monsters; it knows nothing of mere men. It paints its amiable characters as demigods, its evil ones as demons.

Thus Arnold, like Judas, is an ideal, if not a myth.

Judas was not a bad man; he was merely a credulous man with a good heart—a sentimentalist, an enthusiast.

True, he betrayed his Master, but what of that? The bare fact has no significance to the philosophic mind. Facts are not truths. *Why* did he betray Him? Was it because he loved him less than Peter or the rest of the disciples? I answer, no. On the contrary, he loved Him more than they all.

Was it the temptation of the thirty pieces of silver? Bah!

Judas betrayed Him because of the greatness of his faith. He did not believe that it was in the power of his enemies to harm him. He laughed inwardly at the idea of their foolish and impotent machinations. How could the poor blind conspirators work any evil to the Son of God? How could he, Judas, "betray" Him into their power?

The thing seemed preposterous to Judas. He esteemed them fools, as well as wicked machinators. He despised and laughed at them. He thought it but a just punishment to aid in bringing them to confusion. "I will take their thirty pieces," he said, "and the wretched dupes will realize how little either open force or secret treachery can accomplish against the Lord's anointed." Judas is popularly said to have "sold his Master." The fact is, he supposed he was "selling" his Master's enemies.

Arnold, like Judas, had an excess of faith. He smiled at the folly of the Briton who imagined that the possession of West Point would decide the struggle for independence. He did not believe that his treason could injure his country, and he therefore saw no harm in taking the money of his country's enemies. In short, he was a good man, whose sagacity was equal to his virtue. But, unlike Judas, he was no sentimentalist. He was not weak enough to give back the reward he had received, or to go and hang himself. In this we see his superiority. It is only feeble natures that are capable of repentance.

As to General Greene, the military achievements attributed to him are evidently apocryphal. The results of the latest critical investigations throw a flood of new light upon this subject. It is now well settled that Greene was a member of the sect of Quakers, who, as is well known, are non-combatants. The narratives, therefore, that represent him as commanding the American army, in divers battles of the Revolution, cannot be accepted as trustworthy. Here is another striking illustration of the manner in which the errors of history are detected by the strict application of critical principles.

Again, Gates is repeatedly referred to in these narratives as one of the leading American Generals; whereas, more recent researches show that he was an Englishman. The probability is, that he commanded a division in Burgoyne's army.

Still another striking illustration of the unhistoric character of these so-called "histories" may be found in the fact that they all, without exception, make mention of one "Lord Stirling" as among the number of the American generals, and as being at one time in command on Long Island. A "Lord" acting as general on the rebel side! Yet this preposterous idea seems to have been received with unquestioning credulity.

But why occupy our time so unprofitably? Why dwell upon details of a pseudo-historical character, which carry on their face the evidences of their untrustworthiness.

Whoever has intelligently followed me in the foregoing critical and philosophical investigation, knows all that is worth knowing of Washington's generals. Here is history in a nutshell—the very cream of the philosophy of history—history without a fact, or a figure, or a date!

☞ The Bridgeport Standard tells a story of a keeper of a toll bridge, who refused a silver quarter in payment for toll, and insisted on having good money.

☞ A crinoline manufacturer in Saxony has made, during the last ten years, no less than 963,784,000 hoop skirt springs, or enough to go around the world thirteen times and a half.

☞ The ladies of Great Salt Lake City recently presented Judge Titus, the United States Supreme Judge for the territory of Utah, with a veritable chemisette. It is said the needlework inscription thereon, in red, white and blue, was not quite as complimentary as Cleopatra's tributes to the infatuated Antony.

☞ The Louisville Journal has been printed thirty-six years, and the Boston Post thirty-four, and the editors who controlled their columns at their commencement occupy the same positions to-day.

EVELYN HOPE.

Beautiful Evelyn Hope is dead;
Sit and watch by her side an hour:
That is her book shelf, this her bed:
She plucked that piece of geranium-flower,
Beginning to die too, in the glass;
Little has yet been changed, I think—
The shutters are shut, no light may pass
Save two long rays through the hinge's chink.

Sixteen years old when she died!
Perhaps she had scarcely heard my name;
It was not her time to love; beside,
Her life had many a hope and aim,
Duties enough and little cares,
And now was quiet, now astir;
Till God's hand beckoned unawares,
And the sweet white brow is all of her.

Is it too late, then, Evelyn Hope?
What? your soul was pure and true;
The good stars met in your horoscope,
Made you of spirit, fire, and dew—
And just because I was thrice as old,
And our paths in the world diverged so wide,
Each was naught to each, must I be told?
We were fellow-mortals, naught beside?

No, indeed! for God above
Is great to grant, as mighty to make,
And creates the love to reward the love—
I claim you still for my own love's sake!
Delayed it may be for more lives yet,
Through worlds I shall traverse, not a few—
Much is to learn and much to forget,
Ere the time be come for taking you.

But the time will come—at last it will,
When, Evelyn Hope, what meant, I shall say,
In the lower earth, in the years long still,
That body and soul so pure and gay?
Why your hair was amber, I shall divine,
And your mouth of your own geranium's red—
And what you would do with me, in fine,
In the new life come in the old one's stead.

I have lived, I shall say, so much since then,
Given up myself so many times,
Gained me the gains of various men,
Ransacked the ages, spoiled the climes:
Yet one thing, one, in my soul's full scope,
Either I missed or itself missed me—
And I want and find you, Evelyn Hope!
What is the issue? let us see!

I loved you, Evelyn; all the while
My heart seemed full as it could hold—
There was place and to spare for the frank young smile,
And the red young mouth, and the hair's young gold;
So, hush—I will give you this leaf to keep:
See, I shut it inside the sweet cold hand;
There, that is our secret! go to sleep;
You will wake, and remember, and understand.

ROBERT BROWNING.

Adulterations in Spain.

The Epoca of Madrid gives such a description of Madrilene diet as to make it appear that the only genuine article to be procured is garlic. The butter is composed of tallow, remnants of cheese, the juice of the petals of marigold, and raw potatoes scraped and reduced to pulp. Bread is adulterated with the flour of peas, beans, &c., and whitened with carbonate of magnesia, bicarbonate of soda, plaster of Paris, alabaster, &c. Most of the chocolate sold at Madrid does not contain a particle of cocoa, for which flour, fat, and a few aromatic substances are substituted. Sausages are made with all kinds of villanous ingredients, such as the remains of dead horses. The list might be almost indefinitely prolonged; but the Madrilene art of adulteration seems to have attained its highest perfection in the adulteration of wines and spirits, which they manufacture, leaving out the juice of the grape altogether.

☞ Agassiz tells about a sort of fish in Brazil which can climb trees. They are probably peculiar to the tropical climb.

☞ "Tell the truth and shame the devil." I know lots of people who can shame the devil easy enuff, but the tother thing bothers 'em.—*Josh Billings.*

☞ An exchange paper says, "A mutton chop in boarding-house parlance, means a piece of the bone of a sheep from which the mutton has been all chopped off."

☞ The President of Peru has taken a method of insuring his re-election, novel in a Republic. He has arrested the opposing candidates and sent them out of the country, and thereby prevented their accession to the chair of State, even if they should be elected.

"The Hair, Scalp and Face."
DR. B. C. PERRY,

Dermatologist, author of the above valuable Book, published and for sale by JAMES MILLER, 522 Broadway, can be consulted at No. 49 Bond street, New York, for all cutaneous diseases of the head or scalp. Loss of hair and premature grayness; *moles, warts and worts* permanently cured; moth patches, freckles, pimples, comedones (called black worms), and all brown discolorations removed from the face.

To remove moth patches, freckles, or any brown discoloration from the skin, ask your druggist for Perry's Moth and Freckle Lotion, or send to Dr. Perry.

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Dr. Radway's Pills (Coated) Are Infallible As a Purgative and Purifier of the Blood.

BILE.

Bile in the Stomach can be suddenly eliminated by one dose of the Pills—say from four to six in number. When the Liver is in a torpid state, when species of acrid matter from the blood or a serous fluid should be overcome, nothing can be better than Radway's Regulating Pills. They give no unpleasant or unexpected shock to any portion of the system; they purge easily, are mild in operation, and, when taken, are perfectly tasteless, being elegantly coated with gum. They contain nothing but purely vegetable properties, and are considered by high authority the best and finest purgative known. They are recommended for the cure of all disorders of the Stomach, Liver, Kidneys, Nervous Diseases, Indigestion, Dyspepsia, Biliousness, Bilious Fever, Inflammation of the Bowels, Piles, and symptoms resulting from Disorders of the Digestive Organs. Price, 25 cts. per box. Sold by Druggists. dec15-2t

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THE LADY'S FRIEND.

SPLENDID INDUCEMENTS FOR 1867.

The proprietors of this favorite monthly, beg leave to call the attention of their patrons and the public to their splendid arrangements for the coming year. Preserving all their old and valued contributors, they have now on hand, in addition to shorter stories and sketches, the following novelets, which will appear successively:

ORVILLE COLLEGE,

A new story by Mrs. HENRY WOOD, author of "East Lynne," "The Channings," &c., &c.

HOW A WOMAN HAD HER WAY.

By ELIZABETH PRESCOTT, author of "Told by the Sun," &c.

NO LONGER YOUNG.

By AMANDA M. DOUGLAS, author of "In Trust," &c.

DORA CASTEL.

By FRANK LEE BENEDICT.

Mrs. Wood writes that her story will run through the year. It will begin in the January number.

These will be accompanied by numerous shorter stories, poems, &c., by Florence Percy, Mrs. Louise Chandler Moulton, Miss Amanda M. Douglas, Miss V. F. Townsend, August Bell, Mrs. Hosmer, Frances Lee, &c., &c.

The Lady's Friend is edited by Mrs. HENRY PETERSON, and nothing but what is of a refined and elevating character is allowed entrance into its pages.

The Fashions, Fancy Work, &c.

A Splendid double page finely colored Fashion Plate, engraved on steel, in the finest style of art, will illustrate each number. Also other engravings illustrating the latest patterns of Dresses, Cloaks, Bonnets, Head-dresses, Fancy Work, Embroidery, &c.

BEAUTIFUL STEEL ENGRAVINGS.

The beautiful steel engravings which adorn The Lady's Friend are, we think, unequalled.

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We offer for THE LADY'S FRIEND precisely the same premiums as are offered for THE POST. The lists can be made up either of the Magazine, or of the Magazine and Paper conjointly, as may be desired.

The Terms for Clubs of THE LADY'S FRIEND are also precisely the same as for THE POST—and the Clubs also can be made up for both Magazine and Paper conjointly if desired.

☞ The contents of the Lady's Friend and of The Post will always be entirely different.

☞ Specimen numbers sent on receipt of 20 cts. Address

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DAVIS PAIN KILLER.

Gents:—The confidence I have in Perry Davis' Pain Killer, as a remedy for Coughs, Colds, Burns, Sprains, and Rheumatism, for the cure of which I have successfully used it, induces me cheerfully to recommend its virtues to others. A few months ago I had recourse to it to destroy a felon; although I had never heard of its being used for that purpose, but having suffered intensely from a former one, and having no other remedy at hand, I applied the Pain Killer freely for about fifteen minutes at evening, and repeated the application very briefly the next morning, which entirely destroyed the felon, and increased my confidence in the utility of the remedy. Yours truly,

A. W. CURTIS, Romeo, Mich.,
Minister of the Wesleyan Methodist Church.
dec22-2t

AYER'S CHERRY PECTORAL—the world's great remedy for Colds, Coughs and Consumption. dec22-2t

THE MARKETS.

FLOUR—The market is more active. About 6500 bbls sold in lots to the retailers and bakers at $8 to $8,50 for superfine, $9@10,50 for extra, $10,50@12,25 for low grade and fancy northwest family, $11@13 for Penna and Ohio family, and $14@15 ₩ bbl for fancy brands, according to quality. Rye flour—Small sales are making at $7,25 ₩ bbl.

GRAIN—Wheat continues dull. Sales of Penna red at from $2,60@2,90; 3000 bus southern do at $3@3,17, the latter rate for choice; 1000 bus of prime New York amber at $3, and small lots of white at $3,20@3,25 ₩ bus. Rye—1250 bus southern sold at $1,25; 800 bus western at $1,30, and 1400 bus Penna at $1,33@1,35 ₩ bus. Corn—40,000 bus new yellow sold at from 95c@$1; 3000 bus new white at 95@97c, and 3000 bus old yellow at $1,12@1,17 ₩ bus. Oats 27,000 bus sold at 57@58c ₩ bus for prime.

PROVISIONS—The demand is limited. Small sales are making at $22@22,50 ₩ bbl for new mess Pork; 15@19c ₩ lb for plain and fancy canvassed Hams; 12½@13c for pickled do; 9½@10c for salt Shoulders, and 12½@13c ₩ lb for prime Lard in bbls and tcs. Dressed Hogs are selling at $7,50@9 ₩ 100 lbs. Mess Beef sells in lots at $10@20 for western, and $22@23 ₩ bbl for city packed. Butter—Sales are making at 20@35c for roll, 30@32c for dairy, and 15@19c ₩ lb for solid packed. Cheese is selling at 16½@17c ₩ lb for New York factory. Eggs sell at 33@35c ₩ dozen.

COTTON—About 1000 bales of Middlings sold, in lots, at 33@34c for Uplands, and 35@36c ₩ lb for New Orleans.

BARK—1st No 1 Quercitron sells at $35 ₩ ton.

BEESWAX—Sales of yellow at 40c ₩ lb.

COAL continues inactive. Sales are making at $5@5,25 for White Ash, and $5,25@5,50 ₩ ton for Red Ash, as to quality.

FEATHERS—Sales of good Western are making at 50@65c, and choice at 87@90c ₩ lb.

FRUIT—Green Apples—Sales are making at $2@3 ₩ bbl. Dried Apples—8000 lbs sold at 8½@10c ₩ lb. Dried Peaches—Sales of unpared quarters at 15@16c, halves at 18@19c, and pared at from 30@35c ₩ lb.

HOPS are in fair demand. Prime new sell at 65@70c, and fair to good at 45@60c ₩ lb.

SEEDS—Cloverseed—600 bus sold at $9@9,25 for old, and $9,50@10 ₩ bus for new. Timothy is selling at $3,50@3,75. Flaxseed sells at $3 ₩ bus.

SPIRITS—N. E. Rum sells at $2,65@2,67 ₩ gallon. Whiskey—holders ask $2,20@2,25 for Pennsylvania, and $2,40@2,43 ₩ gal for Ohio bbls.

TALLOW—Sales of city rendered at 11½c, and country at 11@11½c ₩ lb.

WOOL—The market continues dull. About 100,000 pounds sold in lots at prices ranging from 62@63c for extra fine; 55@59c for fine; 49@51c for medium; 40@45c for coarse; 47@50c for tub washed; 31@33c for unwashed; and 32@34c ₩ lb for No. 1 Western pulled, according to quality.

PHILADELPHIA CATTLE MARKETS.

The supply of Beef Cattle during the past week amounted to about 2600 head. The prices realized from 15½@16c ₩ lb. 240 Cows brought from $40 to 65 ₩ head. Sheep—6000 head were disposed of at from 4½@6½c ₩ lb. 5000 Hogs sold at from $6,00@9,60 ₩ 100 lbs.

PROSPECTUS FOR 1867.

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

"THE OLDEST AND BEST OF THE WEEKLIES."

GEMS OF NATIVE AND FOREIGN LITERATURE.

The contents of THE POST shall consist, as heretofore, of the very best original and selected matter that can be procured—

Stories, Sketches, Essays,

ANECDOTES, AGRICULTURAL ARTICLES, RECEIPTS, NEWS, LETTERS, from the best native and foreign sources.

We design commencing, in the first number of January, a new story, called

THE OUTLAW'S DAUGHTER;

A Tale of the South-West,

BY EMERSON BENNETT,

whose stories of "THE PHANTOM OF THE FOREST" and "THE WHITE SLAVE, A TALE OF MEXICO," have been so eagerly read in our paper during the present year. This and other SERIAL STORIES—now on hand, or stipulated for—with shorter stories from

OUR HOST OF OLD CONTRIBUTORS,

will present a Feast of Good Things for the coming year.

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THE POST is exclusively devoted to Literature, and therefore does not discuss political or sectarian questions. It is a common ground, where all can meet in harmony, without regard to their views upon the political or sectarian questions of the day.

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In addition to the SEWING MACHINE which we have offered for four years past, to the great advantage of hundreds of our subscribers, we now offer SILVER PLATED TEA SETS, and TEA and TABLE SPOONS, &c., GOLD and SILVER WATCHES, DOUBLE BARREL GUNS, ALLEN'S and SPENCER'S RIFLES, MELODEONS, CLOTHES' WRINGERS, APPLETON'S CYCLOPÆDIA, &c., as follows:

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" 8.	For 30	"	"	an Allen's Patent Breech Loading Rifle, worth		35.00
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☞ The lists may be made up for The Post exclusively, or for The Lady's Friend exclusively, or partly for one and partly the other, as is desired.

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No. 6. Is a Twist Double Barrel Gun, Patent Breech, finely finished—an excellent article.

No. 7. Is also a Silver Lever Watch with a hunting case, and a finer finished article than No. 5.

No. 8. Is Allen's Patent, *Breech Loading* Rifle—large bore. One of the best of the breech-loaders.

No. 9. Is the Wheeler & Wilson No. 3 Sewing Machine, such as we have offered for the last four years. We will also send this Machine on the old terms of twenty subscribers and sixty dollars (that is, ten dollars *in addition* to the amount of the subscription price) if desired. And we will send any of the higher priced Wheeler & Wilson's Machines, if the difference in price is also remitted.

No. 10. There are *six pieces* in this set. A *Coffee-Pot, two Tea-Pots, a Creamer, Sugar* and *Slop Bowls*. Silver Plated on the best White Metal, they have all the beauty of solid silver, and are now used in the very best families. The pattern is a beautiful one—and altogether this is a most desirable Premium. The set will be boxed carefully, and shipped from the manufacturer by railroad or express, as desired.

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☞ Specimen copies will be sent to those desirous of getting up clubs, on the receipt *of five cents*.

☞ An English paper, reviewing Lady Harries Sinclair's cookery-book, called "Dainty Dishes," says that the authoress, shortly after the appearance of her work, "received a number of proposals, from which she made a judicious selection, and forthwith married." Instead of "I met her at a fancy fair," modern gallants should, therefore, sing,—"I met her at a kitchen-range."

☞ The two things Mrs. Grundy, however clothed, concerns herself most about, are just those she should let alone—other people's domestic affairs and their religion.

☞ "Isn't there an awful strong smell of pigs in the air?" asked Smith of Jones. "Yes," replied Jones, "that's because the wind is from the sow-west."

☞ On the road to Epsom a moustached youth, on the top of a drag, thus saluted a fat coachman who was gravely driving his master and family. "Hullos, you sir, where's your shirt-collar? How dare you come to the Derby without a shirt collar?" John growled forth, without lifting his eyes from his horse, "Ow could I, when your mother has not sent home my washing."

☞ "Katy, have you laid the table-cloth and plates yet?" "An' sure I have, mem—everything but the eggs; and isn't that Biddy's work?"

☞ An Iowa young man lately committed suicide the morning after he got "the mitten" from a young lady.

THE GHOST
Of the Hollow Field.

BY MRS. HENRY WOOD,

AUTHOR OF "EAST LYNNE," &c., &c.

[From Advance Sheets, expressly forwarded for the Saturday Evening Post.]

I have been asked to write a Christmas Story—"something about ghosts." In compliance, I give one that—so far as the actors and witnesses believed—is a real ghost story; not one born of the imagination. The facts are very peculiar; and, for my own part, I don't see how they are to be accounted for, or explained away. The details, as relating to the appearance, are given with simple truth, just as they occurred.

In the parlor of a commodious dwelling-house, in the rural village of Hallow, there sat a lady, one Monday afternoon, mending soiled muslins and laces. It was Mrs. Owen, the mistress of the house, and she seemed in poor health. Suddenly the door opened, and a middle-aged woman, with a sensible though hard-featured face, came in. She looked superior to an ordinary servant; more like a housekeeper; and spoke with a strong country accent.

"I've come to ask a fine thing, mistress, and I don't know what you'll say to me. I want holiday to-morrow."

"Holiday!" repeated Mrs. Owen, in evident surprise. "Why, Mary, to-morrow's washing-day."

"Ay, it is; nobody knows it better than me. But here's my sister come over about this wedding of Richard's. Nothing will do for 'em but I must go to it. She's talking a lot of nonsense; saying it should be the turning-point in our coolness, and the healer of dissensions, and she won't go to church unless I go. As to bringing in dissensions," slightingly added Mary Barber, "she's thinking of the two boys, not of me."

"Well, Mary, I suppose you must go."

"I'd not, though, mistress, but that she seems to make so much of it. I never hardly saw her in such earnest before. It's very stupid of her. I said, from the first, I'd not go. What do them grand Laws want with me—or Richard, either? No, indeed! I never thought they'd get me to it—let alone the wash!"

"But you do wish to go, don't you, Mary?" returned Mrs. Owen, scarcely understanding.

"Well, you see, now she's come herself, and making this fuss. I hardly like to hold out. They'd call me more pig-headed than they have done—and that needn't be. So, mistress, I suppose you must spare me for a few hours. I'll get things forward before I start in the morning, and be back early in the afternoon; I shan't want to stop with 'em, not I."

"Very well, Mary; we shall manage, I dare say. Ask Mrs. Pickering to come in and see me before she goes. Perhaps she'll stay to tea."

"Not she," replied Mary; "she's all cock-a-hoop to get back again. Richard and William are coming home early," she says.

Mary Barber shut the door; she had stood holding the handle in her hand all the time; and returned to the room she had left—a great barn of a room, where the children were accustomed to play. She was regarded more as a friend than a servant by the family she served. But one servant besides herself was kept, a girl entirely under Mary Barber. She was housemaid, nurse, overlooker, everything, and she did the work altogether of any two. She was generally called "Mary Barber," one of the children being named Mary. On Mrs. Owen's sick days, Mary Barber would shut herself up with the children in this remote barn of a room, and keep them in quietness.

The four children were gathered round Mrs. Pickering when Mary returned. It was something new to them to have a visitor. The two sisters were much alike, tall, sensible-looking, hard-featured women, with large, well-formed foreheads, and honest, steady grey eyes. But Mrs. Pickering looked ill and careworn. She wore a very nice violet silk gown, a dark Paisley shawl, and Leghorn bonnet. Mary Barber had been regarding the attire in silent condemnation; except her one best gown, *she* had nothing but cottons.

"Well, Hester, the mistress says she'll spare me," was her announcement. "But as to getting over in time to go to church, I don't know that I can do it. There'll be a thousand and one things to do to-morrow morning, and I shall stop and put forward."

"You might get over in time, if you would, Mary."

"Perhaps I might, and perhaps I mightn't," was the plain answer. "It's a five-weeks' wash; and the missis is as poorly as she can be. Look here, Hester—it's just this: I don't want to come. I *will* come, as you make such a clatter over it, and I'll eat a bit o' their wedding-cake, and drink a glass o' wine to their good luck; but as to sitting down to breakfast—or whatever the meal is—with the Laws and their grand company, it's not to be supposed I'd do it. I know my place better. Neither would the Laws want me to."

"They said they'd welcome you."

"I daresay they did!" returned Mary, with a miff; "but they'd think me a fool if I went, for all that. I shouldn't mind seeing 'em married, though, and I'll get over to the church, if I can. Anyway, I'll be in time to drink health to 'em before they start on their journey."

Mrs. Pickering rose. She knew it was of no use saying more. She wished good-bye to the children, went to Mrs. Owen's parlor for a few minutes, absolutely declining refreshment, and then prepared to walk home again. Mary attended her to the door.

"It's fine to be you—coming out in your puce silk on a week-day!" she burst out with, her tongue refusing to keep silence on the offending point any longer.

"I put it on this afternoon because I was expecting Mrs. Law," was the inoffensive answer. "She send me word she'd come up to talk over the arrangements; and then I got a message by their surgery boy, saying she was prevented. Don't it look nice, Mary?" she added, taking a bit of the gown up in her fingers. "It's the first time I've put it on since it was turned. I kept it on to come here; it seemed so cold to put it off for a cotton; and I've been feeling always chill of late."

"What be you going to wear to-morrow?" demanded Mary Barber.

Mrs. Pickering laughed. "Something desperate smart. I can't stay to tell you."

"You've got a gown a-purpose for it, I reckon," continued Mary, detaining her; "what sort is it?"

"A new fawn silk. There! Good-bye; I've a power of things to do at home to-night, and the boys are coming home to an early tea."

Mrs. Pickering walked away quickly as she spoke, and Mary Barber ran back to the bare, half furnished place where she had left the children.

"Now, I want to go out just for five minutes," she said to them, "and if you children will be very good and quiet, and stop in this room, and not make a noise, or run in to tease your mamma, I shall see what I've got in my pocket for you when I come back. Who says yes?"

The children all said it—said it with eager tongues—and looked surreptitiously at Mary Barber's pocket. But they could only see as far as the outside. She shut the door upon them; and just as she was, without putting on a bonnet, ran down the village street until she came to a place popularly known as "Smith's shop." It sold everything—meat, grocery, hardware, toys, wearing apparel, and sundries. Mrs. Smith was behind the counter, and Mary imparted her wants—a new ribbon for her bonnet—white, or something as good as white.

It was the days of satin ribbons—for I daresay you have already discovered I am not writing quite of the present time—and by good luck, and rather to Mary Barber's surprise, Mrs. Smith produced a roll of white satin, encased carefully in cap-paper. She didn't always have such a thing by her, she said. Mary Barber bought four yards—some narrow to match, for her cap border—and set off home again. Hearing from the children that they had been "as quiet as mice," she dived into her pocket, and produced a large mellow summer apple. Cutting it into four parts, she gave one to each.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Pickering was walking rapidly homewards. Hallow was (and is) situated about three miles from Worcester, and her house was between the two—nearer the city, however, than the village. She and her sister Mary had been the daughters of a small, hard-working farmer, Thomas Barber, who died when they were very young women, leaving nothing behind him except a few debts. The household goods were sold to pay them, and the girls had to look out for a living. Hester married John Pickering, Mary went to service. The Pickerings got on in the world. A cottage and a couple of fields and a cow grew into—at least the fields did—many fields, and they into hop gardens. From being a successful hop-grower, John Pickering took an office in Worcester, and became a prosperous hop-merchant. He placed his two sons in it—well-educated youths; and on his death, his eldest son, Richard, then just twenty-one, succeeded him as its master. This was four years ago. Richard was to be married on the morrow to Helena Law, daughter of Law the surgeon; and Mary Barber, as you have heard, considered she should be out of place in the festivities.

And she was right. Over and over again had the Pickerings urged Mary to leave service, as a calling beneath her and them, and to live with themselves. Mary declined. As to living with them, she retorted, they knew as well as she did there'd be no "getting on" together; and help from them to set up a couple of rooms for herself, or an independent cottage, was what *she'd* never accept. She said it was "their pride;" they said they only wanted her to be more comfortable. The contention ran on for years; in fact, it was continuously running on in a sort of under-current, if it did not always rise to the surface; and the result was a coldness, and not very frequent meetings. Mary Barber obstinately remained in her condition of servitude, and was called "pig-headed" for her pains.

Not much so, however, by Mrs. Pickering: she understood very little of the world's social distinctions, and cared less; and she had latterly had a great trouble upon her, beside which few things seemed of weight. For some time past there had been ill-feeling between her two sons: in her heart perhaps she most loved the younger, and, so far as she dared, took his part against the elder. Richard was the master, and overbearing; William was four years the younger, and resented his brother's yoke. Richard was steady, and regular as clock-work; William was rather given to go out of an evening, spending time and money. Trifling sums of money had been missed from the office by Richard, from time to time; he was as sure in his heart that William had helped himself to them as that they had disappeared, but William coolly denied it, and set down the accusation to his brother's prejudice. In point of fact, this was the chief origin of the ill-feeling; but Richard Pickering was considerate, and had kept the petty thefts secret from his mother. She, poor woman, fondly hoped that this marriage of Richard's would heal all wounds, though not clearly seeing how or in what manner it could bear upon them. In one month William would be of age, and must become his brother's partner; he would also come into his share of the property left by their father.

Mrs. Pickering went home ruminating on these things, and praying—oh how earnestly!—that there should be peace between the brothers. Their house was surrounded by fields; a very pretty, though small, dwelling of bright red brick, with green venetian outside shutters to the different windows; jessamine trailed over the porch, over the sills of the sitting-room windows, on either side the entrance door. Many-colored flowers clustered round the green lawn in front; and behind was a fold yard on a very small scale, for they kept cows, and poultry, and pigs still. The land was somewhat low just here, and no glimpse of the Severn winding along in front between its banks, could be caught; but there was the fair city of Worcester beyond, with its fine cathedral, and the taper spire of St. Andrew's Church rising high against the blue sky.

The young Pickerings came home as agreed upon: not, alas! in the friendly spirit their mother had been hoping for, but in open quarrelling. They were both fine grown young men, with good features, dark hair, and the honest, sensible gray eyes of their mother; Richard was grave in look; William gay, with the pleasantest smile in the world. Poor Mrs. Pickering! hasty words of wrath were spoken on either side, and for the first time she became acquainted with the losses at the office, and Richard's belief in his brother's dishonesty. It appeared that a far heavier loss than any preceding it had been discovered that afternoon.

"Oh, Richard!" she gasped; "you don't know what you say. He would never do it."

"He has done it, mother—he must have done it," was the elder son's answer. "No one else can get access to my desk, except old Stone. Would you have me suspect him?"

"Old Stone" was a faithful servant, a many-years' clerk and manager, entirely beyond suspicion, and there was no one else in the office. Mrs. Pickering felt a faintness stealing over her, but she had firm faith in her younger, her bright, her well-beloved son.

"Look here, mother," said Richard; "we know—at least I do, if you don't—that his expenditure has been considerably beyond his salary. Whence has he derived the sums of money he has spent—that he does not deny he has spent? If I have kept these things from you, it was to save you pain: Stone has urged me to tell you of it over and over again."

"Hush, Richard! The money came from me."

William Pickering turned round; he had been carelessly standing at the window looking out on the setting sun. For once his pleasant smile had given place to scorn.

"I'd not have told him so much, mother: *I* never have. If he is capable of casting this suspicion on me, why not let him enjoy it. Times and again have I assured him I've never touched a sixpence of the money; I've told that interfering old Stone so, and I might as well talk to the wind. I could have knocked the old man down this afternoon when he accused me of being a 'disgrace' to my dead father."

It is of no use to pursue the quarrel, neither is there time for it. That Mrs. Pickering, in her love, had privately furnished William with money from time to time was an indisputable fact, and Richard could not disbelieve his mother's word. But instead of its clearing up the matter, it only (so judged Richard) made it blacker. Had he been robbing the office, he had been, legally, robbing his mother; words grew higher and higher, and the brothers, in their anger, spoke of a separation. This evening, the last of Richard's residence at home, was the most miserable his mother had ever spent, and she passed a great part of the night at her bed-side praying that the matter might be cleared up, and the two brothers reconciled.

The morning rose bright and cloudless; it was lovely September weather; and Mary Barber was astir by times. Washing-day in those days, and in a simple country household, meant washing-day. It most certainly did at Mrs. Owen's; everybody was expected to work, and did work, the master excepted. Mary put her best shoulder to the wheel that morning, got things forward, and started about ten o'clock. The wedding was fixed for eleven at All Saints' Church, and Mary calculated that she should get comfortably to the church just before the hour, and ensconce herself in an obscure corner of it, as she meant to do.

She was in her best: a soft, fine gray cashmere gown, kept for high-days, a gray twinkled silk shawl with a handsome sewn-on border of lilies and roses, and a cottage straw bonnet trimmed with the white satin ribbon. That shawl might have been worn by a lady; it had been a present to Mary for her own wedding (which had been rudely frustrated through the faithlessness of man, and terribly sore was she upon it unto this day,) and was as good as new, never coming out above once a year. She brought with her no cap, intending to be firm on the points of not remaining and not removing her bonnet; she'd step into Mr. Law's house, and drink to the bridegroom and bride, and taste the cake, and then she'd start back home again.

She took the field way, it was pleasanter than the dusty road, and went quickly on with her umbrella, a large, green cotton thing, tied with a string around the middle, quite a foot in diameter. The skies were serenely bright, showing no prospect of rain for days to come, but Mary Barber would not have ventured out in her best without an umbrella to guard against contingencies for untold gold

She had traversed nearly two-thirds of her way, and was in the last field but one before turning into the road. It was a large field, this, called popularly the hollow field, from the circumstance of a hollow or dell being in one part of it. This part Mary Barber had left behind her, and as she walked along the path that led midway through it, some church clock chiming the half hour after ten, came distinctly to her ear in the stillness of the rarefied air. "I've stepped out well," quoth she.

It was at this moment that she discerned some one seated on the stile at the end of the path that led into the next field. Very much to her surprise, as she advanced nearer, she saw it was her sister. Mrs. Pickering was sitting sideways, her feet towards Worcester, her face turned to Mary, as if she were waiting for her, and would not take the trouble to get over. To use a common expression, Mary Barber could hardly believe her own eyes, and the proceeding by no means met with her approbation.

"Of all the simpletons!—to come and stick herself there to wait for me. And for what she knew I might have took the road way. They be thinking to get me with 'em to church in the carriage, but they won't. I told her I'd not mix myself up in the grand doings, neither ought I to, and Hester's common-sense must have gone a wool-gathering to wish it. Ah! she's been running herself into that stitch in her side."

The last remark was caused by her perceiving that Mrs. Pickering, whose left side was this way, had got her hand pressed upon her chest or heart. The doctors had warned Mrs. Pickering that any exertion by which this pain was brought on, might be dangerous. "Serve her right!" cried unsympathizing Mary Barber, who had no patience when people did foolish things.

And now she obtained a clear view of her sister's dress. She wore the violet silk gown of the previous afternoon, and a white bonnet and shawl. Mary, on the whole, regarded the attire with disparagement.

"Why, if she's not got on her puce gown! Whatever's that for? Where's the new fawn silk she talked of, I wonder? I'd not go to my eldest son's wedding in a turned gown; I'd have a new one, be it silk or stuff. That's just like Hester, she never can bear to put on a new thing; she'd rather— If I don't believe the shawl's one of them beautiful Chaney crapes."

It looked a very nice shawl, and was glistening with richness in the rays of the sun. That it was a China crape was nearly certain; no other sort of shawl would have had so deep a fringe. China crape shawls in those days cost their price; and Mary Barber condemned it at once, as connected with her sister.

"I say, Hester," she called out, as soon as she got near enough for her voice to reach the stile, "what on earth made you come here to meet me?"

Mrs. Pickering made no reply, gave no token of recognition whatever, and Mary supposed that she had not caught the words. Her face looked unusually pale, its expression mournfully sad and serious, its eyes turned on Mary with a fixed stare.

"Sure," thought Mary, "nothing can have fell out to stop the wedding! Richard's girl wouldn't

run away as that faithless chap of mine did. Something's wrong, though, I can see, by her staring at me in that stony way, and never opening her mouth to speak. I say, Hester, is anything— Deuce take them strings again!"

The concluding apostrophe was addressed to her shoe-strings. To be smart, Mary Barber had put new galloon ribbon into her shoes, and one or other of them had been coming untied all the way, to her great wrath. Laying down her umbrella on the edge of the grass, and her folded handkerchief, which she had carried in her hand, atop of it, she stooped down and tied the shoe, giving the knot a good tug as additional security.

"Now, then, come undone again, and I'll—Bless me! where's she gone?"

In raising her head Mary Barber missed her sister; the stile was vacant. Hasting to it, she climbed over into the next field, and there stood in what might be called a paroxysm of astonishment, for no trace whatever was to be seen of Mrs. Pickering. It was a large field, a hedge dividing it from the one she had just traversed, the path running across it before her. She looked here, she looked there, she looked everywhere, in vain. Mary Barber had once treated herself to witness the performance of a conjuror in the large room of the Bell, at Worcester; she began to think he must have been at work here.

"Hester!" she called out, raising her voice to its utmost pitch, "Hester, where *do* you got to?"

The air took away the sound, and a bird aloft seemed to echo it, but there was no other answer. The woman stood like one moonstruck. Was it conjuring? or what else was it? The hedge, a trim, well-kept, cropped hedge, afforded no spot for concealment, there was no ditch or any other hiding-place—nothing but the broad open field, and no human being, save herself, stirring in it.

"Well, this beats bull-baiting," ejaculated Mary Barber, in the broad country phraseology in vogue in those days. "I'd better pinch myself to see whether I be awake or dreaming."

She turned herself about from side to side, she went back over the stile to the field she had traversed, and stared about there, but no trace could she see of Mrs. Pickering. Finally she passed over the stile again, and stood a moment to revolve matters.

"She must have gone off somewhere on the run while I'd got my eyes down on that dratted shoe," was the conclusion the woman came to. "And more idiot she, when she knows running always brings on that queer pain at her heart."

It might have been a reasonable solution had there been anywhere to run to: that is, had the field not been so broad and wide as to admit a possibility of her running out of sight. In good truth there was no such possibility. Mary Barber continued her way across the field, and then, instead of pursuing her road to Worcester, she turned aside to the house of the Pickerings. That her sister could not have got back to it she knew, for the only way was the one she took. Trying the back door, she found it fastened, and, on passing round to the front, that was fastened also. There was no carriage waiting at the gate; on the contrary, everything seemed silent and shut up. Mary Barber gave a sharp knock.

"One would think you were all dead," she cried, as a maid-servant opened the door. "They are gone, I suppose."

"Yes, they are gone," was the girl's reply. "My missis left about ten minutes since."

"More than that, I know," was the answering remark. "What made her come and meet me, Betsey?"

"She didn't come," said Betsey.

"She did come," said Mary Barber.

"She did not," persisted the servant.

"Why, my goodness gracious me, girl! do you want to persuade me out of my senses?" retorted Mary Barber in anger. "She came on as far as the Hollow Field, and sat herself on the stile there, waiting for me to come up. I've got the use of my eyes, I hope."

"Well, I don't know," returned the girl dubiously. "I was with her at the moment she was starting, and I'm sure she'd no thought of going then. She was just going out at this door eating her bit of bread and butter, when she turned back into the parlor and put down her green parasol, telling me to bring her small silk umbrella instead: it might rain, she said, fair as it looked. 'And make haste, Betsey,' she says to me, 'for it don't want two minutes of the half hour, and I shan't get to All Saints' in time.'"

"What half hour?" asked Mary Barber, in a hard, disputing sort of tone.

"The half hour after ten. Sure enough, in a minute or two our clock struck it."

"Your clock must be uncommon wrong in its reckoning then," was the woman's rejoinder. "A half-past ten she was stuck on the stile looking out for me. It's about ten minutes ago."

It was about ten minutes since her mistress went out, but Betsey did not venture to contend further. Mary Barber always put down those who differed from her.

"After all, she has not took her umbrella," resumed the girl. "I couldn't find it in the stand, off by the kitchen; all the rest of the umbrellas was there, but not missis's silk one, and when I ran back to tell her I thought it must be upstairs, she had gone. Gone at a fine pace, too, Mrs. Barber, which you know is not good for her, for she was already out of sight, so I just shut the door, and drew the bolt. It's a pity she drove it off so late."

"What made her drive it off?"

"Well, there was one or two reasons. Her new fawn gown, such a beauty it is, never was sent home till this morning—I'd let that fashionable Miss Reynolds make me another, I would!—and when missis had got it on, it wouldn't come to in the waist by the breadth of your two fingers, and she'd got her pain very bad, and couldn't be squeezed. So she had to fold it up again, and put on her turned puce—"

"*I* saw," interrupted Mary Barber, cutting the revelation short. "I say, Betsey, what's her shawl? It looked to me like one of them Chaney crapes."

"It's the most lovely Chaney crape you ever saw," replied the girl enthusiastically. "Mr. Richard made it a present to her. She didn't want to wear it, she said it was too grand, but he laughed at her. The fringe was that depth."

"And now, you obstinate thing," sharply put in Mary Barber, as the girl was extending her hands to show the depth of the fringe, "how could I have seen her in her puce gown, and how could I have seen her in the shawl unless she had come to meet me? I should as soon have expected to see myself in a satin train, with flounces, as her in a Chaney crape shawl; and Richard must have more money than wit to have bought it."

"And where is she now, then?" asked Betsey, to whom the argument certainly appeared conclusive. "Gone on by herself to the church?"

"Never you mind!" returned Mary Barber, not choosing to betray her ignorance upon the unsatisfactory point. "Don't you contradict your betters again, Betsey Marsh."

Betsey humbly took the reproof.

"Why could she not have had a carriage, and went properly?" resumed Mary Barber. "It might have cost money, but a son's marriage comes but once in a lifetime."

"The carriage came, and took off Mr. Richard, and she wouldn't go in it," said the girl. And then she proceeded, dropping her voice to a whisper, to tell of the unpleasantness of the previous evening, and of the subsequent events of the morning. Mr. William was up first, and went out without breakfast, leaving word he was gone to the office as usual, and should not attend the wedding. This she had to tell her mistress and Mr. Richard when they came down stairs; her mistress seemed dreadfully grieved, she looked as white as a sheet, and as soon as breakfast was over, she wrote a letter, and sent Hill with it into Worcester to Mr. William. "It was to tell him to come back and dress himself, and go with her to the wedding, I know," concluded the girl, "and that's why, waiting for him, she would not go with Mr. Richard when the carriage came, and why she stayed, herself, till the last minute. But Mr. William never came, and Hill's not come back either."

"Then why on earth did she come to meet me, instead of making the best of her way to the church?" demanded Mary Barber.

"It's what she didn't do," retorted the girl; "she never had no thoughts of going to meet you."

"If you say that again, I'll—Why, who's this?"

The closing of the little iron gate at the foot of the garden had caused her to turn, and she saw William Pickering. He was flushed with the rapid walk from the town—conveyances were not to be hired at hasty will then in Worcester as they are now—and came up with a smile on his good-humored face.

"I hope my mother's gone," he called out.

"Yes, sir," answered Betsey.

"So, you and Richard have been quarrelling again, I hear, and you must go off in a temper this morning," was Mary Barber's reproving salutation. "I'm glad you've had the grace to think better of it, Master William!"

The young man laughed.

"The truth is, my mother's note was so peremptory—in a sort—that I had no choice but to obey it," he answered. "I was not in the office when Hill left it, but I came as soon as I could. Some hot water, Betsey. Look sharp."

"You'll not get to All Saints' in time," said Mary Barber.

"I'll have a try for it; they may be late themselves. What time is it now?" he continued, as he bounded up the stairs.

As if to answer him, the large kitchen clock at that moment rang out the quarter to eleven. It was a clock that struck the quarters; as many kitchen clocks did in those old-fashioned days.

"Is that clock right?" asked Mary Barber, remembering her conclusion that it could not be, and why; and feeling in a maze upon the past yet. "Just look at your watch, William, and tell me."

"It's never wrong," put in Betsey, as she came hurrying out of the kitchen with the jug of hot water, and probably deeming it a convenient juncture tacitly to maintain her own opinion. "It don't vary a minute in a year."

She said true. Nevertheless, William Pickering, in courtesy to the request, halted on the stairs midway, and took his watch from his pocket.

"It is quite right," he said. "Besides, I know that must be just about the time. You wait for me in the parlor, Mary, and we'll go on together."

She turned into the parlor generally used, and waited for him. The boys had always called her "Mary," short, following the habit of their father and mother. On the table lay Mrs. Pickering's green parasol, just as she had put it down.

In five minutes he was down stairs again, dressed; as handsome a young man as all Worcestershire could have produced—upright, frank, merry. Mary Barber told him how his mother had come to meet her, and how she had suddenly disappeared. He laughed, and said Mary must have fallen into a doze while tying her shoe. They were passing through Henwick when the clocks struck eleven.

"There!" exclaimed Mary Barber.

"Never mind," said he, gayly, "we shall get in for the tail."

They took the lower road, as being the nearest, cutting off the corner by the suburb of St. John's, as well as the new road, crossed the bridge over the sparkling Severn, and turned off to All Saints' Church just as the tardy bridal party drove up.

"I hope they have not been waiting for me!" exclaimed William Pickering. "Which carriage is my mother in, I wonder? I shall take her in."

"She won't be in the carriage; she was going straight into the church; Betsey said so!" snapped Mary Barber, excessively aggravated to find herself in the very midst of the alighting company. Richard Pickering drew up to his brother.

"Where's the mother?" he asked. "We have been waiting for her all this while."

"In the church, I think, if she's not with you. I am but come up myself now."

However, range their eyes as they would round the church when they got inside it, there was no sign of Mrs. Pickering. William, burying animosity for the occasion, stood by his brother at the altar, his best man, and the ceremony proceeded. Mary Barber ensconced herself behind a remote pillar, peeping surreptitiously round it to watch the party out of church, Richard leading his very pretty bride.

"I'll let the ruck of 'em get into old Law's before me," quoth she to the female pew-owner.

And accordingly the "ruck" did get in, and then Mary Barber started. She supposed Mrs. Pickering would be there, as did all. The conclusion drawn was, that she had not arrived in time for the ceremony, and so had gone straight to the surgeon's. His residence was not far from the church, and as Mary Barber slowly approached it, she saw quite a crowd of persons coming from the opposite way, in one of whom she recognized an officer of justice. Halting at the door to stare at these—and they seemed to be reciprocating the compliment by staring at her in a curious manner—William Pickering came out.

"What can have become of my mother, Mary?" he exclaimed. "I'm going home to see after her. She's not at Mrs. Law's."

"Why, where's she got to?" responded Mary Barber. "I'll tell you what, William Pickering," quickly added the woman, an idea flashing across her, "she's gone demented with the quarrelling of you two boys, and has wandered away in the fields! I told you how strangely she stared at me from the stile."

"Nonsense!" said the young man.

"Is it nonsense! It—Whatever do you people want?" broke off Mary Barber.

For the persons she had noticed were surrounding them in a strange manner, hemming them in ominously. The officer laid his arm upon William Pickering.

"I'm sorry to say that I must take you prisoner, sir."

"What for?" coolly asked William.

"For murder!" was the answer. And as the terrible words fell on Mary Barber's ear, a wild thought crossed her bewildered brain—Could he have murdered his mother? Of course it was only her own previous train of ideas, connected with the non-appearance of her sister, that induced it.

Not so, however. Amidst the dire confusion that seemed at once to reign; amid the indignant questionings of the bridal party, who came flocking out in their gay attire, the particulars were made known. Mr. Stone, the old clerk, had been found dead on the office floor, an ugly wound in the back of his head. Richard Pickering, in his terror, cast a yearning, beseeching glance on his brother, as much as to say, Surely it has not come to this!

The events of the morning, as connected with this, appeared to have been as follows:—Mr. Stone had gone to the office at nine o'clock, as usual, and there, to his surprise, found William Pickering, opening the letters. The latter said he was not going to his brother's wedding, and the old clerk reproved him for it. William did not like this; one word led to another, and several harsh things were spoken. So far the office servant testified, a man named Dance, whose work lay chiefly in the warehouse amongst the hop-pockets, and who had come in for orders. They were still "jangling," Dance said, when he left them. Subsequent to this, William Pickering went out to the warehouse, and to one or two more places. On his return, he found that his mother's out-door man-of-all-work, Hill, had left a note for him; a large brewer in the town, named Corney, was also waiting to see him on business. When Mr. Corney left, he opened the note, the contents of which may as well be given:—

"William! you have never directly disobeyed me yet. I charge you, come back at once, and go with me to the church. Do you know that I have passed three parts of the night on my knees, praying that things may be cleared up between you and your brother!

"Your loving Mother."

After that nothing clearly was known. William Pickering said that when he quitted the office to go home, in obedience to his mother's mandate, he left Mr. Stone at his desk writing; but a short while afterwards the old clerk was found lying on the floor, with a terrible wound in the back of his head. It was quite evident he had been struck down while bending over the desk. The man Dance, who was sought for in the warehouse, and found, spoke of the quarrelling he had heard, and hence the arrest of William Pickering.

Mary Barber's first thought, amidst the confusion and the shock, was of her sister. If not broken to her softly, the news might kill her; and the woman, abandoning cake, and wine, and company, before she had seen them, started off there and then in search of Mrs. Pickering, not knowing in the least where to look for her, but taking naturally the way to her home.

"Surely she'll be coming in to join 'em, and I shall, perchance, meet her," was the passing thought.

Not Mrs. Pickering did Mary Barber meet, but Hill, the man. He was coming down the road in a state of excitement, and Mary Barber stared in blank disbelief at his news: his mistress had been found on her bed—dead.

In an incredibly short time the woman seemed to get there, and met the surgeon coming out of the house. It was quite true. Mrs. Pickering was dead. With her face looking as if it were turned to stone, Mary Barber went up to the chamber. Betsey, the servant, her tears dropping fast, told the tale.

When Mary Barber and Mr. William had departed, she bolted the door again, and went back to her work in the kitchen. By and by, it occurred to her to wonder whether the silk umbrella was safe upstairs, or whether it had been lost from the stand: a few weeks before, one of their cotton umbrellas had been taken by a tramp. She ran up into her mistress's room to look, and there was startled by seeing her mistress. She was sitting in an arm-chair by the bedside, her head leaning sideways on its back, and her left hand pressed on her heart. On the bed lay the silk umbrella, its cover partially taken off, and by its side a bit of bread-and-butter, half eaten. At the first moment the girl thought she was asleep; but when she saw her face she knew it was something worse. Running out of the house in terror, she met Hill, who was then returning from Worcester, and sent him for the nearest surgeon. He came, and pronounced her to be quite dead. "She must have been dead," he said, "about an hour."

"What time was that?" interrupted Mary Barber, speaking sharply in her emotion.

"It was half-past eleven."

There could not be the slightest doubt as to the facts of the case. While the servant was sent by her mistress in search of the umbrella, and delayed through being unable to find it, Mrs. Pickering must have run upstairs to her chamber, either remembering that it was there, or to look for it. She found it, and was taking off the case, putting down the bread-and-butter she was eating, to do so (a piece of bread-and-butter which the maid had just before brought to her) and must have then found herself ill, sat down in the chair, and died immediately. Her own medical attendant had warned her that any great excitement might prove suddenly fatal.

"It was the oddest thing, and I thought it at the time, though it went out of my mind again, that she should have disappeared from sight so soon," sobbed Betsey. "I don't think I was away much above a minute after the umbrella, and when I came back and found her gone, and looked out at the door, I couldn't see her anywhere. I looked in the garden, I looked down the path as far as my eyes would go. 'Why, missis must be lost!' says I, out loud. And she had left the front door wide open, too—and that ought to have told me she had not gone out of it. And I, like a fool, never to have remembered that she might have run upstairs, but just bolted the door and went about my work."

Mary Barber made no comment; a strange awe was stealing over her. This had occurred at half-past ten. It was at precisely that time she saw her sister on the stile.

"Betsey," she presently said, her voice subdued to a whisper, "if your mistress had really gone out, as you supposed, was there any possibility of her coming in later without your knowledge?"

"No, there was not; she couldn't have done it," was the answer to the question; and Mary Barber had felt perfectly certain that it had not been possible, though she asked it. The only way to Mrs. Pickering's from the stile was the path she had taken herself, and she knew her sister had not gone on before her.

"I never unbolted either of the doors, back or front, after she (as I thought) went out, except when I undid the front for you," resumed the girl. "I don't care to be in the house by myself with 'em open since that man frightened me last winter. No, no; missis neither went out nor came in; she just went upstairs to her room, and died. The doctor says he don't suppose she had a moment's warning."

It must have been so. Mary Barber gazed upon her as she lay back, upon the holiday attire she wore, all the counterpart of what she had seen on the stile. The puce silk gown looking as good as new; the really beautiful shawl, with its deep rich fringe; the white bonnet, which she now saw was of plain corded silk. The doctor had closed the eyes, and put the left hand down straight; otherwise she was as she was found. On the patchwork quilt of the bed lay the silk umbrella, the cover half taken off, and the bit of bread-and-butter, half eaten, lay beside it. Mary Barber gazed at all; and an awful conviction came over her, that it was her sister's spirit she had seen on the stile. Never from that hour did she quite lose the sensation of nameless dread it brought in its wake.

"You see, now, Mrs. Barber, you must have been mistaken in thinking my missis went to meet you," said Betsey.

Mary Barber made no answer; she only looked out straight before her with a gaze that seemed to be very far away.

What with one calamity and the other—for the news of William Pickering's apprehension soon travelled up—the house was like a fair the whole of the day. Richard Pickering, bridegroom though he was, was up there; Mr. Law was there, and, on examination, confirmed the other doctor's opinion as to the momentarily sudden death; numberless friends and acquaintances came in and went out again. For once in her life, Mary Barber was oblivious of the home wash, and her promise to return early for it. She took her bonnet off, borrowed a cap of her poor sister's, and remained.

William Pickering was taken before the magistrates in the Guildhall for examination, late in the afternoon. His brother attended it, and—very much to her own surprise—so did Mary Barber. The accusation and the facts had revolved themselves into something tangible out of their original confusion; the prisoner was able to understand the grounds they had against him; and the solicitor, whom he called to his assistance, drove up in a gig to Mrs. Pickering's, and took possession of Mary Barber.

"What's the good of your whirling me off to the Guildhall?" she resentfully asked of him, three times over, as he drove back into Worcester. "I don't know anything about it; I never was inside that office of the Pickerings' in all my life."

"You'll see," said the lawyer, with a smile.

One thing was satisfactory—that old Mr. Stone had come to life again. The blow, though a very hard one, had stunned, but not killed him; he was, in fact, not injured beyond a reasonable probability of recovery. He had no knowledge of his assailant: whoever it was, had come behind him, as he sat bending over his desk, and struck him down unawares.

The Guildhall was crowded: a case exciting so much interest had rarely occurred in Worcester. Independent of the station in life of the prisoner, his good looks, his youth, his popularity with most people, there were the attendant circumstances—the marriage of his brother in the morning, the death of Mrs. Pickering. Of the last sad fact they did not tell him. "Let him get his examination over, poor fellow!" said they, in kindness. And he stood before the court, upright, frank, unfettered by grief. "He must have done it in a moment of passion," said his sorrowing friends and the public; for the facts seemed too clear against him for disbelief—the long-continued ill-feeling known to exist between him and the old clerk, who had persistently taken his brother Richard's part; the quarrelling of the morning, as heard by Dance, and which the prisoner did not deny; and the absence of any one else in the office. Richard Pickering, his breast beating with a horrible conviction that none else could have been guilty, was not one publicly to denounce his brother. He affected to assume his innocence, and he stood by him to afford him all the countenance in his power.

The facts were testified to—those gathered on the first moment of discovery, and others since. Dance spoke of the jangling—as he still called it—between the clerk and his young master. Mr. Corney proved his visit, and that upon its termination he left Mr. Stone and William Pickering alone, and he could see that they were not friendly. This was about twenty minutes past ten. Mr. Corney added, in answer to a question, that he had heard nothing of William Pickering's intention to depart home; on the contrary, he said he should be at the office all day. Subsequently—

Yes, but then he had not opened his mother's note, interrupted the prisoner, who up to this point, acknowledged all that was said to be correct. But, he continued, the instant he read the note, he started for home, knowing how little time there was to lose; and he told old Stone that he need not be cross on Richard's account any longer, for after all he was going to be his best man. He knew no more.

Mr. Corney resumed: A little before eleven he went back to the office, to say he'd take the hops at the price offered, and was horrified to find old Mr. Stone on the ground, as he thought, dead. He raised an alarm; some people ran in from the streets, and he went himself in search of Dance, whom he found in the warehouse; somebody else ran for a constable, others for a surgeon. Of course the conclusion arrived at was, that Mr. William Pickering had done the deed.

The bench appeared to be arriving at the same.

"Not so fast, gentlemen," said William Pickering's lawyer; and he put forth another witness.

It was Mr. Kilpin the hop-merchant, a gentleman well known in the town. He deposed that he had called in at the Messrs. Pickerings' office that morning between half-past ten and eleven. Mr. Stone was alone, writing at his desk. He stayed talking to him three or four minutes, and left at a quarter to eleven. He was enabled to state the time positively from the fact, that—

"Why, then, it could not have been William Pickering; he was at home at that very time," burst forth Mary Barber.

The bench silenced her; but she saw now why she had been brought to the Guildhall.

Mr. Kilpin resumed, taking up the thread of his sentence as if no interruption had occurred—

"From the fact, that as I passed St. Nicholas' Church, it chimed three-quarters past ten. I was on my way to catch the Pershore coach, for I was going by it as far as Whittington, and it was at that moment turning the corner of Broad Street. I had to make a run for it, and to holloa out, and the coachman pulled up opposite the Old Bank. When I got back from Whittington this afternoon," added the witness, "I accidentally met Mr. William Pickering's lawyer, and learnt what had occurred."

Next came the evidence of Mary Barber, that William Pickering was in his mother's house at three-quarters past ten. Of course there could be no further doubt of his innocence after this. Meanwhile the prisoner had been writing a few lines with a pencil on a piece of paper, and it was passed over to his brother. Something in the demeanor of one of the witnesses as he gave his evidence had powerfully struck him.

"I have an idea, Richard, that the guilty man is Dance. Take care that he does not escape. If he has done this, he may also have been the pilferer of your petty cash. Try and get it all cleared up, for the sake of the mother's peace."

"For the sake of the mother's peace!" echoed Richard, with an aching heart. "Poor William little dreams of the blow in store for him."

He did not dream, Richard Pickering; he acted. Giving a hint to the officer to look after Dance, he pressed up to his brother, then being released from custody.

"William," he whispered, "tell me the truth in this solemn moment—and it is more sadly solemn than you are as yet cognisant of—have you really not touched that missing money? As I lay awake last night thinking of it, I began to fancy I might have been making a mistake all through. If so—"

"If so, we shall be the good friends that we used to be," heartily interrupted William, as he clasped his brother's ready hand. "On my sacred word, I never touched it; I could not do so: and you must have been prejudiced to fancy it. I'll lay any money Dance will turn out to have been the black sheep. Both looks and tones were false as he gave his evidence."

And William Pickering was right. Dance was so effectually "looked after" that night, that some ugly facts came out, and he was quietly taken into custody. True enough, the black sheep had been nobody else. He had skillfully pilfered the petty sums of money; he had struck down Mr. Stone as he sat at his desk, to take a couple of sovereigns he saw lying in it. The old gentleman recovered, and gave evidence on the trial at the following March Assizes, and Richard and William Pickering from henceforth were more closely knit together.

But the singular circumstances attendant on the death of Mrs. Pickering—her apparition (for it could be nothing less,) that appeared to Mary Barber—became public property. People in talking of it, mostly with timid glances backward and hushed voices, grew to call it "The Ghost of the Hollow Field," and for a long while neither girl nor woman would pass through it alone.

And that is the ending: and if I have been unduly minute in regard to the dress, or other points, I only reiterate the minuteness given at the time by Mary Barber. The woman—and she was a good, and honest, and truthful woman—believed to her dying day that the spirit of her sister came to lead her to the house (where otherwise she would not have gone) there to meet William Pickering, and so be the means of establishing his innocence.

BROUGHT TO LIGHT.

BY THOMAS SPEIGHT.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

A SECRET EXPEDITION.

When the woman Marie, taking herself into her own confidence, after the fashion of most crazy people, told herself that Henri Duplessis was at White Grange, she stated nothing more than the truth. The Canadian was there in hiding; and there also, as a matter of course, was the faithful Antoine. Duplessis, in the first instance, on leaving Lilac Lodge, had really made his way to London, although the police were utterly baffled in their efforts to trace him, and had there lain up in lavendar for a while, till the heat of the pursuit had in some measure died away. Marie had been shut up at White Grange all this time, to which place, as soon as his plans were ripe, Duplessis himself made his way, in the disguise of a Savoyard, with an organ at his back; and there he was shortly afterwards joined by Antoine. This dangerous move had not been made without a purpose—a purpose over which the Canadian's mind had been brooding ever since his flight from Lilac Lodge, and which he was now prepared to put into execution. The carrying out of this design had been delayed for several weeks in consequence of the unavoidable absence of Clotilde, Lady Spencelaugh's French maid, who, as a great favor, had been lent by her Ladyship for a couple of months to a particular friend about to proceed to Paris for a short time, whose acquaintance with the French language was of a limited character. Clotilde's presence at Belair was necessary to the plans of Duplessis, and as Clotilde was now back again, further delay was unadvisable.

Hitherto, Duplessis had said nothing to Antoine as to the nature of the great scheme which had been ripening in his brain for so long a time; but now that the eve of the night itself which he had fixed upon for his secret expedition had arrived, there was no necessity for further reticence, more especially as he needed the assistance of that devoted servitor. The best room in White Grange, a room seldom used by the family, and considered in the light of a state-parlor, had been given up to Duplessis. He had swung a sort of hammock in one corner of it; and in this room he slept, read, smoked, and took his meals; and once and again played a

greasy game of piquet with Antoine. Considered at its best, it was a mean and shabby little den, and the Canadian's refined tastes rose in revolt a hundred times a day against the dingy squalor by which his present life was environed. But all that would now be changed. So, as the afternoon waned, he summoned Antoine from the little loft close under the rafters, where that worthy was enjoying a comfortable after-dinner snooze, and bidding him close the door, and draw his chair up to the fire, he proceeded to unfold the details of his scheme.

Any one who had been acquainted with Henri Duplessis during his season of prosperity, would have found it a difficult matter to recognize that "fine gentleman" under the beak which adverse circumstances had of late compelled him to assume. In place of the drawing-room exquisite, whose happy ease of manner, and unfailing supply of polite *persiflage*, he, perhaps, had secretly envied, he would have seen before him an olive-skinned and rather dirty-looking individual, with a crop of short black spiky hair, and a ragged black moustache; dressed in a suit of clothes whose best days had long been over. But the old fine manner was not to be hidden by a ragged coat; Duplessis was still a gentleman, though his supper might be nothing but bread and cheese and table-beer; and even surly old Nathan Orchard, who, as a rule, had scant respect for any one but himself, never addressed his singular lodger without first carrying a finger to his forehead; and it is almost needless to add that no change of circumstances could weaken in the slightest degree the devotion, and affectionate respect, with which Antoine regarded his master.

"Come here, my chicken, I want to talk seriously to thee," said Duplessis, as Antoine closed the door. "Nearer still, for we must have no eavesdroppers. That will do.—Thou seest these two bank-notes? They are of the value of ten pounds respectively, and are absolutely the last fragments of a once comfortable little fortune. Our old curmudgeon of a host will claim them as his due to-morrow, and when once they pass out of my fingers, one shilling and fourpence-halfpenny will be all that Henri Duplessis can call his own in the world. A pleasant prospect, is it not, my infant?"

Antoine's chubby face lengthened visibly; and there gradually crept over it such an expression of blank, but still comical consternation, that Duplessis could not help bursting into a hearty laugh.

"Our lucky star is hidden for a time behind the clouds, my Antoine," resumed the Canadian. "I must turn ambulatory musician for a livelihood, and watch the world and its doings over the green baize of a barrel-organ, in company with a small monkey of many accomplishments."

"And what is to become of me, Monsieur Henri?" demanded Antoine in a pitiful voice.

"Joss in summer, and coffee in winter. Let them be good and cheap, and in a dozen years thy fortune will be made."

"Ah! Monsieur Henri, I don't want fortune; I don't want anything but to stay always with my dear master; to share his lot whatever it may be; to work for him now that he is poor, as—"

"Enough, my dear boy—enough!" said Duplessis with a sigh. "Thy words stir strange feelings in my breast, such as had better remain unawakened. Thou hast the finest heart in the world; and so long as thou art left to me, I cannot believe that my good star has deserted me entirely. My fortunes, truly, are at a desperate ebb; but listen, my cabbage, listen with all thine ears: I have a scheme, a splendid scheme, which, if it only succeed, will make us both rich men for life!"

"Ah! Monsieur Henri, I knew your genius too well to fear that you would ever have need to walk long in the gutter."

"It was to carry out this scheme that I came back from London into the very jaws of the lion, as one may say," resumed Duplessis; "and it would have been carried out weeks ago, had not Clotilde been away. At last I have succeeded in arranging everything for to-night. How are thy nerves, my Antoine? Does thy pulse beat steadily?—is there no lurking fear at the bottom of thy heart? The service is one of some danger; and thou mayst as well put thy revolver into thy pocket before we set out."

Monsieur has proved my courage before to-day," said Antoine proudly. "He has no occasion to doubt me now."

"I do not doubt thee, thou pig-headed son of a hippopotamus. I know that when the moment comes, thou wilt be true as steel. O Antoine, if only we are successful! Think what openings there are in the New World, in Mexico, in California, for men of enterprise, with capital at their back."

"But Monsieur has not yet favored me with any particulars of his great scheme," said Antoine quietly.

"A merited reproof. *Ecoutez donc.* In the first place, we leave here to-night as the clock strikes twelve, and then—" The Canadian's voice sank to a whisper, and the two heads came together over the little table. Listening, Antoine took in all the details of the plot eagerly.

"It is a scheme worthy of the genius of Monsieur, and it cannot be otherwise than successful," said the glowing Antoine, as Duplessis sank back in his chair, and prepared to light a cheroot. "But has Monsieur decided what to do with *La Chatte?*"

"No, Antoine," said Duplessis, pausing in his occupation, while a deep frown darkened his face; "I have not decided. What can I do with her? To go on for ever paying her board and lodging at this place would ruin a millionaire. Our friend, Monsieur Orchard, does not grant us the asylum of his roof without charging us a heavy price for it. And yet, to attempt to take her with us out of the country, would be to run a thousand risks; more, I confess, than I have the courage to meet. What to do, I know not."

"A couple of pinches of that gray powder which Monsieur once showed me, dropped into her chocolate some morning, and, pouf! her little candle is blown out for ever, and nobody but ourselves is any the wiser."

"A devilish scheme, Antoine, and one that I can never agree to. No; we must find some less objectionable mode of getting rid of her."

"Monsieur is over-particular," said Antoine drily. "In such cases, indecision is only another name for weakness. When this little Belair business is well over, let Monsieur go to Paris, and enjoy himself for a while, leaving me still here. The claws of La Chatte must be clipped at once and for ever, and Antoine Gaudin is the man to do it. Monsieur has no occasion to trouble his mind further in the matter."

Antoine twisted the waxed end of his moustache tenderly as he spoke, while an evil smile crept over his face, which brought into view his great yellow wolfish teeth; but Duplessis, smoking his cheroot thoughtfully, and gazing intently into the fire, answered never a word.

The comforting words whispered by Mrs. Winch in the ear of Lady Spencelaugh, as that person came back to consciousness in the little vestry, and reiterated again and again, as the two women sat together in the privacy of her Ladyship's dressing-room, were not without their effect on the mind of her on whose behoof they were spoken. Surely, what the widow said must be true! John English had sailed in the *Ocean Child;* the *Ocean Child* had been lost with all on board. Granting, then, John English to have been the real heir, of which there could no longer be much doubt, the title and estates, now that he was gone, would come, in proper legal sequence, to Gaston; and this horrible confession, which she had been driven by the force of circumstances to make, would, for the sake of the family, be hushed up by the few people to whom it was known. But even supposing that, by accident or design, some tittle of the truth were to leak out, and become the common property of that select circle in which her Ladyship lived and moved—the gossip of inferior people she held in utter contempt—no one knew better than she did how quietly but efficiently Time's busy fingers work at the cleansing of a soiled reputation, provided that the stain be not of too deep a dye to begin with; how patiently the old graybeard will strive to mend the flaws in your character, as though it were a piece of cracked china, only the porcelain on which he works must be of the finest quality, and not composed of inferior clay; and it is wonderful how much your patched porcelain will often stand in the way of wear and tear, if only common care be used in the handling of it. Three or four years, her ladyship thought, spent not unpleasantly among the German spas, and the galleries of Florence and Rome, and then she might come back with safety, bringing with her a renovated reputation, which would never be too rudely questioned by the denizens of Vanity Fair, where so much base alloy is quietly winked at, and allowed to pass current as sterling coin.

Lady Spencelaugh, deriving what scraps of comfort were possible to her from these considerations, and from the cheering words of her humble friend, Martha Winch, allowed herself, after a time, to be put to bed. She lay quietly enough, so long as the landlady was with her; but no sooner had that indefatigable person taken her leave for the night, than her Ladyship arose. Utterly tired out as she was, both in body and mind, by the events of the day, her brain was yet far too excited for sleep; besides, the quietude of bed frightened her. Her restless fancy peopled the dusky chamber with all sorts of unwelcome visitors, till, unable any longer to bear their company, she crept, shawled and slippered, to the cosy companionship of the dressing-room fire; and there, crouched on the rug, between sleeping and waking, she allowed her mind to play at hide-and-seek with the distorted and ever-changing crowd of doubts, and hopes, and fears, which now claimed her as their own; and enacted over and over again, in fancy, the whole painful drama of the day just closed.

Midnight came and went, but Lady Spencelaugh never stirred. She still lay coiled on the rug, with white fingers tightly intertwined, her head resting on a bunch of rosebuds, cunningly worked with colored silks on the cushion of a *fauteuil.* The silvery voice of the Sèvres clock on the mantelpiece had just told the hour of two, when she was roused from her state of semi-stupor by the noise of the opening door. She turned her head uneasily on its pillow, and said: "Is that you, Clotilde? You may go to bed. I shall not want"—The rest of the sentence died away in her throat at sight of two strange men, their faces covered with black crape, coming rapidly towards her. They were on her before she could scream or give any alarm.

"Speak, and you are a dead woman!" exclaimed one of the men, seizing her roughly by the shoulder, and presenting a pistol at her head.

"Oh, spare my life!" she contrived to gasp out.

"Obey my orders implicitly, and no harm shall happen to you," said the man. "But dare to give the least alarm, and that moment you die!"

He then bade her rise and seat herself in an easy-chair; and with that, the second man whipped a coil of thin rope out of his pocket, and proceeded, dextrously and neatly, to tie her Ladyship in the chair, so that she could move neither hand nor foot; after which he proceeded to gag her with her own pocket-handkerchief, and a small strip of wood, which he had evidently brought for the purpose. When he had done, had her life depended on it, Lady Spencelaugh could not have uttered anything beyond a faint moan.

"Await my return here," said the first man, as the other one stepped back a pace or two, to admire the neatness of his handiwork. "But first bolt both the doors, so that there may be no fear of intruders."

There was something in the tone of this man's voice which, even through the midst of her terror, seemed to strike familiarly on Lady Spencelaugh's ear. Certainly she knew the voice, she said to herself again and again; but where and when she had heard it before, was a question which, in the present perturbed state of her mind, she found herself utterly unable to answer. As before stated, the faces of the men were hidden by crape veils; their dress was homely and commonplace enough; and their boots were covered with some soft material, which deadened the sound of their footsteps.

The second man now seated himself on a chair close to Lady Spencelaugh, and proceeded to light a cigarette. Him her Ladyship regarded with indifference, now that she found her life was not in danger; but her gaze rested uneasily on the first man. Why had he come hither, and what was he about to do? He approached the chimney-piece, and she held her breath. His fingers seemed to be wandering, as if in quest of something, among the intricate scroll-work, and quaint old-world conceits, which the hand of some dead-and-gone sculptor, making the hard marble plastic to his fancy, had carved with loving care and minuteness all over the snowy surface; and her eyes dilated as she watched him. Could it be possible that to this veiled midnight plunderer was known the precious secret guarded by her with such jealous watchfulness—the secret which, she had fondly hoped, was known to no one among the living except herself and Martha Winch? Had the dead found a tongue to whisper it, or by what other occult means had her strange visitors become possessed of the knowledge? Her breath came in thick stifling gasps as she watched him; but when she saw his fingers press gently the fifth marble button from the top on the left-hand side of the mantel-shelf, and at the same moment turn thrice to the left the small brass nob hidden behind the central scroll-work—when she saw one side of the chimney-piece roll gently back on hidden wheels, disclosing, as it did so, a narrow opening in the wall, evidently leading to some mysterious chamber beyond: when Lady Spencelaugh saw all this, knowing that the hoarded treasures of her life—all the gems and precious stones, the gatherings of many years, and which, next to her son, Gaston, she loved better than aught else on earth—were about to be snatched from her for ever, her heart gave way within her, and with a faint groan, that was stifled in her throat, her head sunk forward on her breast, and for a time she remembered nothing more. When Lady Spencelaugh recovered her consciousness, the two men were still there; one of them holding a small spirit-flask in his hand, which he had evidently been applying to her Ladyship's lips, in the hope of bringing her round more quickly.

"She will do now," said he who seemed the leader. "Put on the gag. We have no time to lose;" and with that he turned to a small table near at hand, on which were spread a quantity of gems and precious stones of various kinds, some of them still uncut, while others were cut and set as necklaces, bracelets, rings, or other articles of personal adornment: a glittering throng truly. The gag was in her mouth, and Lady Spencelaugh looked on in dumb despair while the veiled man swept all her cherished treasures into a wash-leather bag, and then disposed of the same in some safe place about his person. They were lost to her without hope of recovery; all her precious hoard was gone, the slow, patient accumulation of twenty years. This hoarding of precious stones had been a monomania with her, secretly pursued, for not even Sir Philip himself, although aware of her weakness in this respect, had had any idea of the extent to which she had carried it. By means of what devilish arts had this white-handed thief learned the secret of the hiding-place? As her bright darlings slipped from her eyes for ever, she felt at that moment as though it would be a pleasant thing to die, and so end all this weary coil of calamities which was encompassing her around without any hope of escape. This brief, vivid drama in which she had been an involuntary actress, had had for her such an intensity of meaning as to cause her to forget for a little while that other dark drama of the day just done, in which she had played one of the leading parts; but now that this second act was consummated, the full weight of her misery flowed over her in a double wave, under whose accumulated force her very soul seemed to die within her, leaving her for a time powerless to suffer further. She had some dim sense of being left alone, and of hearing the key turned in the lock as the two men beat a hasty retreat—yes, alone; bound hand and foot, powerless to stir or speak, and without hope of release till morning should reveal her condition to some one—if, indeed, she could live thus till morning. To die would perhaps be best.

CHAPTER XL.

THE EAST WING.

It was quite dark by the time Jane Garrod got home from Belair, which place she had left immediately after it had been decided to visit the family vault; with the result of which visit she would of course remain unacquainted till the following morning. The snow was coming down fast as Jane plodded homeward along the solitary by-paths which she knew so well; and when she turned a corner of the road, and while still some distance off, saw the ruddy glow of fire-light that streamed across the white road from the window of her own little home, her heart felt glad within her to think that her lot in life was cast in humble places, such as the sweet flower of Content loves best to haunt.

Jane scraped her feet, and shook some of the snow off her gown and shawl; and wondering whether Abel would have had sufficient forethought to have the kettle boiling against her return, she quietly opened the door and went in—went in, to find a bearded, stalwart individual sitting by the chimney-corner, who no sooner caught sight of her than he started up, and crossing the floor in a couple of strides, seized her by both hands, and shook them heartily, and then stooped and kissed her just as heartily on the cheek.

"Thank Heaven, you are come back safe and sound!" were Jane's first words when she had recovered in some measure from her surprise, and had further refreshed herself with a quiet fit of crying. "But, oh, what a deal of pain and anxiety you would have spared both Miss Frederica and me if you had only written to tell us you were about to leave Pevsey Bay!"

"I did write to you," said John, "only an hour before the train started, telling you that I was going to America to try and hunt up some proofs of my identity."

"Certainly your letter never came to hand," said Jane. "As I've many a time told Miss Frederica, there was some treachery at work in the case, of which we knew nothing. But we need not mind that now. May I ask, sir, whether you have succeeded in finding what you went so far to look for?"

"I have—beyond my utmost expectations," answered John. "But not another word shall you drag out of me till you have told me all the news about a certain young lady."

"A certain lady is quite well, and that is all I can tell you about her at present," said Jane with a smile. "I have been with her all day, and when I left her this afternoon, her last words were: 'Oh, if *he* would but come!' Whom she meant by *he*, I could not of course imagine."

John thanked his stars that just then the fire gave too dim a light to allow of the hot flush that rose to his forehead being seen even by Jane's friendly eyes.

"And Sir Philip?" said John interrogatively, after a little pause. "I ought to have asked after him first, but even now, I almost dread to put the question."

"Sir Philip is dead; and you are now Sir Arthur Spencelaugh," said Jane solemnly; and with that, she got up from her chair, and swept John a stately old-fashioned courtesy, full of obeisance and respectful homage, and stood to hear his commands.

John turned away his head with a groan, and Jane knew that his tears were falling fast.

"If I had only come in time!" he murmured at last—"in time to see him and tell him who I am, and ask his blessing! I loved him, Jane Garrod, loved him and reverenced him from the first moment I saw him, as I never loved and reverenced any other man. And now, I shall never see him more on earth!"

Jane, leaving him alone in the twilight with his grief, went softly out into another room. In about half an hour, she came back, carrying a lighted lamp. "It is needful, Sir Arthur, that you should go up to Belair at an early hour to-morrow," she said; "there is much to do, and—"

"Hush!" said the young man gently, laying his hand on her arm. "You must not call me by that name—at least, not till the world shall have acknowledged my right to bear it; and even then, to you, to whom I owe more than I can possibly repay, let me never be other than plain John English!"

"Miss Frederica, sir, has fought your battle bravely while you have been away," said Jane, as she went deftly about her preparations for tea.

"God bless her for it!" said John heartily.

"But to-day was the hardest time of all for her—almost more than she could bear."

"How so? I do not understand you," said John with reawakened interest.

Jane was burning to tell her guest all that had happened, affecting his interests, since his departure from Pevsey Bay; and now that his curiosity was aroused by her last words, she took care that it should not flag again till she had said all that she wanted to say; and John himself, when once Jane had begun her narrative, was as eager to hear as she was to tell.

Tea was an hour later than usual that evening at the little station-house, a want of punctuality on the part of his wife which surprised Abel Garrod even more than the return of John English had done, or the narrative of the strange events which had happened that day at Belair. When tea was over, John produced his meerschaum, and Abel his yard of clay; and then, in order to satisfy Jane's evident curiosity in the matter, John entered into some details of what had befallen him after leaving Pevsey Bay; mentioning, among other things, how he had secured a berth on board the *Ocean Child,* and had even gone on board her preparatory to sailing, when, hearing accidentally, at the last moment, that a brother of the Mr. Felix who had so nobly befriended him some years before, had just arrived in Liverpool from Australia, he had at once gone on shore again, preferring the risk of losing his passage to missing the opportunity of seeing the brother of his dead friend, for whose ear he had certain private messages, which Mr. Felix had charged him to deliver in person, should a possibility of doing so ever arise.

As it happened, fortunately for himself, John English did miss his passage on board the *Ocean Child,* which vessel was lost a few days after sailing, with all on board. John had been tracked by Brackenridge on board the ill-fated ship, and when news came of the wreck, the chemist at once concluded that Mrs. Jakeway's late lodger was one of those who had perished.

John English lay on the night of his return in the same cosy little room in which he had passed so many weary days and nights during the time that Jane Garrod was nursing him of his wound; but his brain was far too busy to allow of sleep coming near him. He drew up the blind before getting into bed, and then lay staring out at the dark cloud-squadrons hurrying brokenly across the sky—no unmeet emblem, it seemed to him, of the hurrying throng of broken thoughts coursing so restlessly, just then, across his brain, all darkened and solemnised by the knowledge that nevermore on earth would he see that face which he had learned to love and reverence before even his wildest dreams had pictured it as the face of his father. Two or three hours passed away, and John's eyes were as wide open as ever; when suddenly he leaped out of bed, attracted to the window by a glare of reddish light in the western horizon, which he had been vaguely watching for some time, but which was now rapidly growing so bright and lurid as to claim his serious attention. Suddenly there came a tap at his door, and then Abel Garrod spoke: "For Heaven's sake, get up, sir, as quickly as you can! *Belair is on fire!*"

Leaving Lady Spencelaugh bound and gagged so that it was impossible for her either to stir or speak, the two men locked the door of the room behind them, and then stole noiselessly along the corridor leading from her Ladyship's apartments, and so down the broad shallow stairs, at the foot of which they were met by Clotilde, thanks to whose good offices they had obtained such easy and unopposed access to the interior of the Hall. The French girl carried a small lamp in her hand, and, after laying a warning finger on her lips, she beckoned the two men to follow her, and so led the way across the entrance-hall, and then through one or two winding passages, till she brought them to a little door at the back of the house, which opened into the kitchen-garden.

"All safe, so far," said Clotilde in a whisper: "you must go back by the same way that you came. The garden-walk has been trodden by half-a-dozen people since the snow ceased falling, so that there is no danger of your footsteps being tracked."

"Thou hast been a good child, and thou shalt not be forgotten," said one of the men, as he chucked the waiting-girl under the chin. "But the most difficult portion of thy task is yet before thee. When the discovery comes, be careful not to overact thy part. Don't be too much surprised—too much horrified. Call up thy tears once or twice—tears look so genuine—in commiseration of my Lady's sufferings; but avoid being noisy. And now, *au revoir;* thou shalt hear from me shortly by a sure hand."

"Such a girl as that is!" said the second man in an oily whisper, as he came up behind the other a minute or two later. "She would have kept me there till—"

"Silence, babbler!" said the other one with a snarl. "Reserve thy *contes d'amour* for another season. Half an hour ago, Henri Duplessis was a gentleman; now, he is a common thief."

Clotilde left alone, felt far too happy to go to bed just then, for Antoine had spoken loving words, and she wanted to muse over all that he had said. She drew her thick woollen shawl over her head, and gliding back noiselessly through the hushed house, softly unfastened a door on the opposite side of the hall, which admitted her on to the terrace, one portion of which was sheltered by a verandah; and here she paced backwards and forwards for nearly an hour, lost in a vague, rosy love-dream, till the piercing cold of the frosty night began to make itself felt. Breaking out of her reverie, she went indoors, and after refastening the door, she proceeded to the little anteroom where she had left her lamp before going out. Opening the door, she started back in terror at finding the room full of smoke—nay, there was more than smoke, there was actual live flame; red quivering tongues licking the wood-work greedily; great lurid blotches, like some terrible eruption, momently spreading, and merging one into another, and gathering strength and fierceness as they spread, and already far beyond any curative means at command of the French girl. She understood it at a glance; the lamp had flared up for want of snuffing, and the flame had caught the tapestry with which the walls in part were lined, and had so spread to the paneling behind, which age had rendered almost as dry and inflammable as tinder. This anteroom was situated in the east wing, and the east wing was by far the oldest part of Belair. True, it had been renovated and repaired at different periods, but always in keeping with the original idea, which had apparently been to make as much use of timber and plaster, and as little of stone and brick, as possible. Lady Spencelaugh's apartments were situated in the east wing, her sitting-room and boudoir on the ground-floor, and her bed and dressing rooms immediately over them. Of the remaining rooms in the wing, one was the anteroom, where the fire originated; another, a great desolate billiard-room; while the rest were seldom used except on those rare occasions when Belair was full of guests. In the whole of the east wing, only two people ordinarily slept, namely, Lady Spencelaugh and her maid.

Stupefied with fear at sight of this new and terrible enemy, and utterly deserted by her usual *sang-froid* and presence of mind, Clotilde rushed back through the passage, and so into the entrance-hall, screaming: "Fire! fire!" and then, unbolting one of the doors, she rushed out into the park, and hurried off in the direction of White Grange, in the vague hope of overtaking Antoine.

Clotilde's screams had been heard by no one except by the miserable woman who had been left bound gagged by the two men, and on her ears the warning words fell with a terrible significance. In all that great house, she was the only person not asleep, and she could neither stir nor speak. The fire was spreading rapidly. It was no longer confined to the ante-room, but had fiercely laid hold of the great oaken staircase that led from the entrance-hall to the upper floors of the east wing; and was having a merry game to itself in the billiard-room; and would soon force its way into the empty chambers overhead. The pungent odor of the burning wood came in hot heavy puffs under the door of the room in which Lady Spencelaugh sat helpless, and gave a dread confirmation to the words of Clotilde. She listened as she never seemed to have listened before, for some voice or other token of the vicinage of human beings; but she heard nothing save the crackling of the flames as they seized on the wood-work at the end of the corridor, and seemed to be testing its quality with their teeth. She had undergone so much mental and bodily torture during the last few hours, that the keen edge of anguish was in some measure blunted; and now that the end of all her sufferings seemed so imminent, she sank into a sort of dull stupor of despair, which lent a strange air of unreality both to herself and her surroundings, making her feel as though she were merely acting a part in some weird, fantastic dream, from which she should presently awake; dulling for a time, as though by the influence of some powerful narcotic, both overwrought body and overwrought brain.

Nor was this spell, if such it may be called, broken till she heard a sudden rush of voices, and knew that the other inmates had taken the alarm. A little later, and there was a louder clamor of voices than before, and she could hear her own name called aloud; and then she knew that they had missed her, and that some effort would be made for her rescue. Therewith the desire to live came back upon her in all its intensity; and what a wild, agonized prayer was that which, from the lowest depths of her heart, went up to Heaven's gate, that she might not die just yet—that she, no martyr to any religion save that of Self, might not be called upon to undergo this fiery trial—that she might live, were it only for a little while, live to redress some of the wrong she had done, live that she might have leisure to repent!

Presently she heard Gaston's voice giving some orders to the men outside, and the sound thrilled her mother's heart. Whatever might happen to herself, her darling was safe; and from that moment one half of her calamity seemed lifted off her. The room by this time was full of stifling smoke, and the menacing crackling of the flames sounded louder with every passing minute. There seemed to be quite a crowd of people collected in the shrubbery outside; she could hear the deep murmur of many voices, now loud, now low, without being able to distinguish anything that was said; and ever and anon the sharp, imperative tones of Gaston sounding clearly above the rest, with what seemed to her like a ring of suppressed agony in their very clearness. After what appeared a terribly long delay, a ladder was found that would reach to the windows of her room; and scarcely had its tip touched the wall, when a man was climbing it with the agility of a sailor, under whose fierce blows, next instant, the panes of the window fell in fragments to the ground.

"Mother! mother! where are you?" called Gaston, for it was he who had climbed the ladder.

The windows of Lady Spencelaugh's apartments were of the old-fashioned diamond-paned sort, with iron cross-bars worked into their frames, and opening only by means of small casements; so that it was impossible for any one to get either in or out that way; and her Ladyship had often secretly felicitated herself on the additional security which her rooms derived from the peculiar formation of the windows.

As it was impossible for Gaston to obtain ingress through the window, all that he could do was to call again, still more loudly than before: "Mother! mother! where are you? For Heaven's sake, speak to me." But the room was filled with a dense smoke, which only seemed to throw back the ruddy glare which shone in through the windows, without being penetrated by it; and Gaston's eyes, as he clung desperately to the bars outside, were quite unable to pierce the obscurity within; besides which, he had every reason to believe that his mother was in bed in the inner room, and his efforts were directed to the rousing of her from her supposed sleep. Again and again he called her; and she in turn put forth all her little strength in a desperate struggle to free herself from some of her bonds, or at least to get rid of the gag; but all her efforts proved utterly futile, and only seemed to have the effect of rendering her a faster prisoner than before.

"My God! she must have been stifled in bed by the smoke!" she heard Gaston say at last; and then she heard him go down, and with that, her last chance of escape seemed to die utterly away. She knew that they would not have tried to reach her through the window, had not all ordinary means of access to her rooms been blocked by the fire. Through the broken window she heard some man who had a louder voice than his neighbors, say that the rooms below were all on fire now, and that the thick beams in the ceiling would soon be burned through, and then— The man's voice was lost again in the murmur of the crowd, and Lady Spencelaugh's soul shuddered within her. There was no hope left her, then—none! Then came another thought: So much for her yet to do, and so little time to do it in!

A sudden cheer from the crowd. What could it mean? And next moment the sound of hurried footsteps advancing along the corridor that led to her rooms; and then the crash of a heavy body against the door; another, and the door broke away from its hinges; and through the smoke there advanced upon her a tall dark figure which, in that first moment of surprise, she could not look upon as other than an apparition from the dead. The current of air from the broken window had thinned the smoke in some measure, and the room was filled with the ruddy glare of the burning house, and in the midst of that glare stood he whom but a few short hours ago she had fondly hoped lay buried fathoms deep beneath the waves—he whose young life she had blighted, whose death she had compassed—he whom she had hated above all others—the eldest-born of her dead husband, and now Sir Arthur Spencelaugh. Oh, the bitterness of owing her life to the courage of this man! Was this the method of his forgiveness?

"You, and in this position, Lady Spencelaugh!" said Sir Arthur, as his quick eye took in the details of the case. "What scoundrel has been at work here? But you must tell me afterwards, for we have not a minute to spare if we would get back in safety."

He had his pocket-knife out even while he was speaking, and was rapidly cutting the cords that fastened her. But even when released from her bonds, she was utterly unable to move either hand or foot, and Sir Arthur seeing this, hastened into an adjoining room, and brought thence a large counterpane, in which he proceeded to wrap the helpless woman; and when this was done, he took her up lightly in his arms, and carried her out by the way he had come. At the end of the corridor he paused; before him lay the gulf of raging fire, several feet in width, which he had so boldly overleaped when on his way to search for Lady Spencelaugh, before which all the other volunteers had paused aghast, and even Gaston, brave enough on all ordinary occasions, had trembled and fallen back, as doubtful of his ability to reach the opposite side. This fiery gulf occupied the spot where the old staircase had been, which was one of the first objects that fell a prey to the flames. From the opposite side of the staircase ran what was known as the Stone Gallery, and the space between the end of this gallery and the corridor where Sir Arthur was now standing was filled by a staircase no longer, but by a seething bed of fire. To leap across from the gallery to the corridor was a desperate one under any circumstances, since to miss your footing on the opposite side meant nothing less than destruction; and burdened as Sir Arthur now was, to get back the same way was a sheer impossibility. The men awaiting his return in the gallery had given him a hearty cheer when they saw him emerge through the smoke holding in his arms the object of his search; but the cheer had ended in something very like a groan, when they saw and recognized the difficulty which he was now called upon to face. There was a minute's intense silence, which Sir Arthur was the first to break. "Fetch up the long ladder out of the shrubbery," he called out to the men in the gallery. They understood in an instant why he wanted it, and two minutes later, there it was. With hearty good-will, they proceeded to push it out from the gallery, and over the burning wreck of the staircase, till its other end rested on the corridor at the feet of Sir Arthur; who then, taking up his burden again, stepped lightly from rung to rung across the fiery gulf, till he reached the opposite side, and then gave up his charge into the hands of the pale-faced Gaston, who as yet knew not the name of the fearless stranger. (TO BE CONTINUED.)

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A boy or girl thirteen years old can operate it. From 15 to 35 yards can be woven with it in a day.

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The Great Strengthening Tonic
(NOT A WHISKEY PREPARATION.)
HOOFLAND'S
GERMAN BITTERS,
WILL CURE
Debility! Debility!
Resulting from any cause whatever.

H

PROSTRATION OF THE SYSTEM
INDUCED BY
Severe Hardships, Exposure, Fevers.
OR
DISEASES OF CAMP LIFE.

SOLDIERS, CITIZENS, MALE OR FEMALE, ADULT OR YOUTH,

Will find this Bitters a pure Tonic, not dependent on bad liquors for their almost miraculous effects.

O

DYSPEPSIA.

And Diseases Resulting from Disorders of the Liver and Digestive Organs,
ARE CURED BY
HOOFLAND'S GERMAN BITTERS.

This Bitters has performed more Cures, gives better Satisfaction, has more testimony, has more Respectable People to vouch for it, than any other article in the market.

O

We defy any one to contradict this assertion, and
WILL PAY $1,000
to any one who will produce a certificate published by us that is not genuine.

HOOFLAND'S
GERMAN BITTERS,
WILL CURE EVERY CASE OF
Chronic or Nervous Debility
AND
DISEASES OF THE KIDNEYS.

F

Observe the following Symptoms, resulting from Disorders of the Digestive Organs:
Constipation, Inward Piles, Fullness of Blood to the Head, Acidity of the Stomach, Nausea, Heartburn, Disgust for Food, Fullness or weight in the Stomach, Sour Eructations, Sinking or Fluttering at the Pit of the Stomach, Swimming of the Head, Hurried and Difficult Breathing, Fluttering at the Heart, Choking or Suffocating Sensations when in a lying posture, Dimness of Vision, Dots or Webs before the Sight, Fever and Dull Pain in the Head, Deficiency of Perspiration, Yellowness of the Skin and Eyes, Pain in the Side, Back, Chest, Limbs, &c., Sudden Flushes of Heat, Burning in the Flesh, Constant Imaginings of Evil, and great Depression of Spirits.

L

REMEMBER,

That this Bitters is not Alcoholic, contains no rum or Whiskey, and cannot make Drunkards, but is the Best Tonic in the World.

READ WHO SAYS SO.

[From the Rev. W. D. Seigfried, Pastor of Twelfth Baptist Church, Philadelphia.]

Gentlemen:—I have recently been laboring under the distressing effects of indigestion, accompanied by a prostration of the nervous system. Numerous remedies were recommended by friends, and some of them tested, but without relief. Your Hoofland's German Bitters were recommended by persons who had tried them, and whose favorable mention of these Bitters induced me to try them. I must confess that I had an aversion to Patent Medicines from the "thousand and one" quack "Bitters," whose only aim seems to be to palm off sweetened and drugged liquor upon the community in a sly way, and the tendency of which, I fear, is to make many a confirmed drunkard. Upon learning that yours was really a medicinal preparation, I took it with happy effect. Its action, not only upon the stomach, but upon the nervous system, was prompt and gratifying. I feel that I have derived great and permanent benefit from the use of a few bottles. Very respectfully yours,
W. D. SEIGFRIED, No. 254 Shackamaxon St.

A

[From the Rev. E. D. Fendall, Assistant Editor Christian Chronicle, Philada.]

I have derived decided benefit from the use of Hoofland's German Bitters, and feel it my privilege to recommend them as a most valuable tonic, to all who are suffering from general debility or from diseases arising from derangement of the liver.
Yours truly, E. D. FENDALL.

[From Rev. D. Merrige, Pastor of the Passyunk Baptist Church, Philada.]

From the many respectable recommendations given to Dr. Hoofland's German Bitters, I was induced to give them a trial. After using several bottles I found them to be a good remedy for debility, and a most excellent tonic for the stomach. D. MERRIGE.

[From Rev. Wm. Smith, formerly Pastor of the Vincentown and Millville (N. J.) Baptist Churches.

Having used in my family a number of bottles of your Hoofland's German Bitters, I have to say that I regard them as an excellent medicine, specially adapted to remove the diseases they are recommended for. They strengthen and invigorate the system when debilitated, and are useful in disorders of the liver, loss of appetite, &c. I have also recommended them to several of my friends, who have tried them, and found them greatly beneficial in the restoration of health.
Yours truly, WILLIAM SMITH,
936 Hutchinson Street, Philada.

N

Rev. J. S. Herman, of the German Reform Church, Kutztown, Berks County, Pa., was cured of Dyspepsia of twenty years standing.

A. M. Spangler, Editor of the *Culturist*, No 25 North Sixth Street, Philadelphia, says this Bitters was recommended to him by a medical friend, and six bottles cured him of complete prostration of the nervous system.

Rev. Thos. Winsor, D. D., Pastor of Roxborough Baptist Church.
Rev. Levi G. Beck, Pastor of the Baptist Church, Pemberton, N. J., formerly of the North Baptist Church, Philadelphia, at present Pastor of the Baptist Church, Chester, Pa.:
These gentlemen express, in the strongest terms, their favorable opinion of this Bitters.

D

Beware of Counterfeits!

☞ See that the signature of "C. M. JACKSON" is on the wrapper of each bottle.

☞ Should your nearest Druggist not have the article, do not be put off by any of the intoxicating preparations that may be offered in its place, but send him, and we will forward, securely packed, by express.

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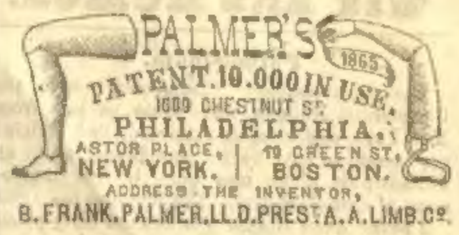

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HIGHEST PREMIUM
LOCK STITCH
SEWING MACHINES,
No. 625 BROADWAY, NEW YORK.
Philadelphia Agency, No. 704 Chestnut St.

These Machines are now sold, with *valuable improvements*, at the following schedule of prices:—

No. 3 Machine, with
Plain Table, $55
Half Case, Panelled, Oiled Walnut, 60
Half Case, Polished, Black Walnut or Mahogany, 65

No. 2 Machine, with
Waxed Black Walnut Table, 60
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Half Case, Polished, Black Walnut or Mahogany, 75
Half Case, Polished, Rosewood, 80
Full Case, Polished, Black Walnut or Mahogany, 95
Full Case, Polished, Black Walnut or Mahogany, with Drawers, 100
Full Case, Polished, Rosewood, 100

No. 1 Machine, with
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Half Case, Oiled Walnut, 80
Half Case, Polished, Black Walnut or Mahogany, 85
Half Case, Polished, Rosewood, 90
Full Case, Polished, Black Walnut or Mahogany, 105
Full Case, Polished, Black Walnut or Mahogany, with Drawers, 110
Full Case, Polished, Rosewood, 110

Every Machine is sold complete with a Hemmer. Nos. 1 and 2 Machines are sold with the new Glass Cloth-Presser, New-style Hemmer and Braider. No. 3 with the Old-style Hemmer.

☞ The number 3, plain table, (worth $55) of the above list, is the machine we are now offering as a PREMIUM for THE LADY'S FRIEND and THE SATURDAY EVENING POST—*see Prospectus.* Any of the higher priced machines may be procured by sending us the difference in Cash.

DEACON & PETERSON,
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ON SUNDAYS—The Market Street cars leave Front and Market Streets 35 minutes before the departure of each train.

MANN'S BAGGAGE EXPRESS will call for and deliver Baggage at the Depot. Orders left at the Office, No. 631 Chestnut Street, will receive attention.

TRAINS LEAVE DEPOT, VIZ.:

MAIL TRAIN	at 8.00	A.M.
PAOLI ACCOM., Nos. 1 & 2, 10.00		
	A.M. & 11.20	P.M.
FAST LINE & ERIE EXPRESS	at 12.00	M.
PARKESBURG TRAIN	" 1.00	P.M.
HARRISBURG ACCOM.	" 2.30	"
LANCASTER ACCOM.	" 4.00	"
PITTSBURG & ERIE MAIL	" 9.00	"
PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS	" 11.00	"

Pittsburg and Erie Mail leaves daily, except Saturday.

Philadelphia Express leaves daily. All other trains daily, except Sunday.

Passengers by MAIL TRAIN go to Williamsport without change of cars, and arrive at Lock Haven at 8.10 P.M.

Passengers by MAIL TRAIN go to Carlisle and Chambersburg without change of cars.

Sleeping Car Tickets can be had on application at the Ticket Office, 631 Chestnut Street.

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CINCINNATI EXPRESS	at 12.50	A.M.
PHILADELPHIA EXPRESS	" 7.10	"
PAOLI ACCOM., Nos. 1 & 2, 8.20		
	A.M. & 7.10	P.M.
PARKESBURG TRAIN	at 9.20	A.M.
LANCASTER TRAIN	" 12.40	P.M.
FAST LINE	" 1.35	"
DAY EXPRESS	" 5.50	"
HARRISBURG ACCOM.	" 9.50	"

Philadelphia Express arrives daily, except Monday.

Cincinnati Express arrives daily. All other trains daily, except Sunday.

Passengers leaving Lock Haven at 7.00 A.M., and Williamsport at 8.40 A.M., reach Philadelphia, without change of cars, from Williamsport, by Day Express, at 5.50 P.M.

The Pennsylvania Railroad Co. will not assume any risk for Baggage, except for Wearing Apparel, and limit their responsibility to One Hundred Dollars in value. All Baggage exceeding that amount in value, will be at the risk of the owner, unless taken by special contract.

For further information, apply to
JOHN C. ALLEN, Ticket Agent, 631 Chestnut St.
SAMUEL H. WALLACE, Ticket Agent, at the Depot.

AN EMIGRANT TRAIN runs daily, except Sunday. For full particulars as to fare and accommodations, apply to FRANCIS FUNK,
ap7-3m No. 137 Dock Street.

WIT AND HUMOR.

Philadelphia.

Our correspondent "Lancaster," says the Commercial Bulletin, who wrote us last from New York, and who, we supposed, had "dried up," seems to have been "wet down" again at Philadelphia, if we may judge by his impressions of that clean city. For instance:—

I never knew Boston was such a dirty place till I arrived here; why, Philadelphia is such a clean city they won't allow any railroad depots in it; the one I arrived at is some distance off in the country,—a place called Kensington,—and the Continental Hotel is reached by half a day's journey in horse-cars and carriages.

Riding through the city at right angles, I remarked to a man by my side, that the avenue we were passing through was probably a street of penitentiaries or almshouses, and asked him if the cholera had been there.

"What do you mean?" says he.

I pointed to the big wooden shutters.

"Oh, you are a Yankee, I see. Well, Philadelphia is such a clean city, we use those shutters because they can be cleaned better than blinds; besides, it is good for the lumber trade."

"But the mourning?"

"Mourning, you fool, these are strings to pull the blinds together; and Philadelphia is such a clean city, we use black, because it won't show the dirt."

"Do the people shut the shutters every night?"

"Certainly! Philadelphia is such a clean city, it wouldn't do to leave so much clean window-glass exposed over night; some Yankee might come along and steal it."

Just then the coach stopped on the outer bank of a gutter in which flowed a swift river of soapsuds, dye-stuffs, and muddy water, to land a passenger.

"Is this part of the Morris Canal?" said I.

"Canal, you fool," says he, "can't you see that Philadelphia is such a clean city, we don't do any such dirty work as digging drains, but let everything flow off the natural way?"

I received this rebuke and a splash of Philadelphia drainage, as another coach passed us, in silence; but looking up the side streets as we got nearer the centre of the city, asked why they kept such heaps of ashes and garbage without removal.

"Well," said my fellow-traveller, "the fact is Philadelphia is such a clean city, we can't get any one here that will do such dirty work as moving garbage and ashes."

I arrived at the Continental at noon; and, immediately after having a room assigned me, engaged a boy with a lantern to pilot me through the entrances.

"Why don't you have these halls better lighted?" said I.

"Because," says the boy, "it's daylight outside; and, besides, Philadelphia is such a clean city, we wouldn't want too much light for Yankees to hunt up any dusty corners with."

You can buy anything at the newspaper stand in the Continental, from a toothpick to a trotting horse, and a ticket to anywhere, from a camp-meeting to a colored wedding, by paying twenty-five per cent. premium for it.

Next day, at about 10 A. M., I took a walk in Philadelphia; supposed from first appearances there had been an overflow of the Schuylkill River or a freshet; found out that the great flow of water was only caused by servants washing the sidewalks. Asked a man if the sidewalks were always two inches under water. Said "Yes, in dry weather, for Philadelphia is such a clean city, they did a good deal of washing here."

Pointed to the middle of the street and asked him why they didn't clean that. Said "he didn't know; but Philadelphia was such a clean city, they didn't mind that much."

Sidewalks two inches under water—men squirting water everywhere with hand-hose—negro girls scrubbing front doorsteps with sand—Irishmen polishing them with marble dust—Irish girls washing the whole lower house-front of the first story—boys scouring off store sidewalks with scrub brooms—ferry boats running in the gutters—the entire population and three-fourths of the Schuylkill, or some other river, in the streets.

Got entirely wet through before 11 A. M. Went back to hotel and put on India rubber boots and patent rubber overcoat, and started again. Population still at work on the door-steps and sidewalks—it appears to be all they think of.

This is a splendid city for consumptives—when it isn't wet it's damp, and when it isn't damp it's mouldy. Strangers in Philadelphia can always be recognized by their constant sneezing and bad colds. Rain commenced falling fast. This made no difference; Philadelphia is such a clean city, that sidewalk washing is a duty—consequently the hand-hose and scrubbing-brushes never stopped for the rain.

Saw a man opening oysters and throwing a big heap of oyster shells out of a market wagon right into one of the public streets; asked him what he did that for; said "that Philadelphia was such a clean city, that people there never eat oysters with the shells on."

Take my advice—leave your crooked ways and come to Philadelphia; don't stop at New York,—the "crook" there is a black one,—but come here, where every thing is done on the "square," and then—although you may not believe it—Philadelphia is such a clean city.

Proving Character.

"Do you know the prisoner, Mr. Jones?"

"Yes, to the bone."

"What is his character?"

"Didn't know he had any."

"Does he live near you?"

"So near that he only spent five shillings for firewood in eight years."

"Did he ever come into collision with you in any matter?"

"Only once, and that was when he was drunk and mistook me for a lamp post."

"From what you know of him would you believe him under oath?"

"That depends upon circumstances. If he was so much intoxicated that he did not know what he was doing, I would. If not, I wouldn't."

A GENTLEMAN ordered a rocking-chair, which was received by his wife, a lady precise in her speech. Upon making a trial of the chair, the gentleman expressed his great satisfaction with it, when his wife remarked, "The man said its equilibrium was very accurately adjusted." "Did he really say that—these very words?" inquired the husband. "Why no, not exactly," replied the lady; "but he said it joggled just right."

COOL, BUT SEASONABLE.

EXTRAVAGANT SWELL.—"Well, Jones, who on earth are you now in for?"

SHERIFF'S OFFICER.—"I ain't in for no one; but I called to see whether your Honor wouldn't give me a Christmas box, cause I have been here so many times during the year."

BESIDE THE SEA.

O little dove, thou wanderer from the sea!
Why hast thou left thy soft and downy nest,
Why dost thou reeling fly,
With that complaining cry?
Come, weary bird, to me,
And nestle on my breast.

O little dove, why art thou sad and pale,
What restless sorrow sighs and flies in thee!
Now fold thy bruised wing,
And broken, bleeding, sing—
Sport of the cruel gale
That drove thee unto me.

Perchance thou comest from some loving heart
That lieth still and cold beneath the sea;
Thy home some shattered bark
That foundered in the dark;
And you, with Heaven's chart
Of instinct, flew to me.

O friend, I'm thinking of the winds that blew
When the frail shallop of our peace went down;
Hope broke in Passion's storm,
And Love's white, flattering form,
Bruised and bleeding, flew
In search of rest and home.

Restless I wander on Time's wave-worn sand,
Beside the waves that sever me from thee,
And send a tender dove,
A weary, wounded love,
To seek thee on the strand,
Far, far across the sea.

My heart doth fly with longing infinite,
To find thee on that dim and distant shore—
Over the moaning waves,
Over the nameless graves,
A little dove so white
Doth seek thee evermore.

Drunk and Crazy.

The biography of the poet Percival contains an anecdote of his meeting with the novelist James. Mr. James had all the airs of a man of society, and Percival was especially shrinking and modest in the presence of a stranger, making his worst impression at first. The parties were introduced, and an attempt was made at conversation, but they did not get on at all. Percival showed a decided repugnance, Mr. James a genteel contempt. Soon entering the cars, they took different seats, and Mr. James said, "My friend, who is that Mr. Percival?" It was replied that he was a distinguished poet, when Mr. James said, "A little cracked, isn't he?" The gentleman with him met Mr. Percival a few days after, who inquired, "Who is that Mr. James?" "G. P. R. James, the novelist," was the reply. Said Percival, "A little drunk, wasn't he?"

☞ If the world were crumbled to the finest dust, and scattered through the universe, there would not be an atom of the dust for each star.

AGRICULTURAL.

Cosmo's Column.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

SPRING WHEAT.

Yes, why not grow spring wheat in New Jersey, and successfully, and as good spring wheat as is grown anywhere else in the United States? If any one has any practical reason or tangible evidence to put in against such a possibility, there are a good many more than Cosmo who would be glad to hear it.

If a convention of all the farmers in New Jersey were to be convened, and the question was put direct—"Why don't we Jerseymen raise more spring wheat?" not three in a thousand would get beyond a better reason than—"Why I didn't know it would grow with us." "I don't believe it will succeed," or, "We have not been in the habit of raising the grain, and don't know anything about it."

The last is the most likely reasonable reason; Jersey farmers' ideas have never yet taken the spring wheat direction, and a few failures, through ignorance or animical pests, have made out a case against spring wheat that New Jersey farmers are willing to accept as good law.

We are glad that "*Farmer*" of Sweedsboro, New Jersey, raises the question against popular prejudice, or perhaps more properly, popular indifference to the production of spring wheat, and cheerfully afford—so far as we are competent, or believe ourselves to be—the information sought.

If "Farmer" feels inclined to convince his neighboring Jersey farmers that very good spring wheat can be grown in New Jersey, there is not much in the way of his doing it. If frosts hold off a few days longer, let him break up, if he has one, a pasture that has lain long enough in grass to require a change of crop. Failing in this, let him plough a field that has been this year in corn. Or failing to plough during December, let him do so as early next spring as he can find the soil in suitable condition. Cross plough, harrow thoroughly, pulverize, and put the field in good tilth. Drill in the Italian spring wheat, six pecks to the acre, and drill in with it four hundred pounds of No. 1 flour of bone, as manufactured by the Boston Milling Company, probably the best wheat fertilizer in existence on all light, sandy soils. Sow as early as the ground can be got ready; keep out pigs and cattle, and the season being propitious and no flies to kill, if "Farmer" does not produce a satisfactory crop of spring wheat, he may go with the majority against Jersey impossibilities and set Cosmo down in his mind as a fossil.

ITEMS FROM ATTICA.

Away up in Wyoming—not ours of the Keystone, but a sister Wyoming of the Empire state, they have a modern Attica, in and about which are some progressive, wide-awake delvers in the soil, who bring forth many good things new and novel, not noised much at fairs and in agricultural journals certainly, but none the less valuable on that account. Some things the Atticans have also not quite new, but more valuable for having earned by age an honest reputation. Among these are the following, furnished, or an account of them, by S. Folsom, Esq., Editor of the *Atlas*, not for "Cosmo's Column," but in a communicative neighborly way to Cosmo himself, who believing that the public may be benefitted thereby, transfers the "copy" *verbatim* to the "Column."

"First—Folsom's *Excelsior Beans*, a cross of the Lima on the Red Runner, established pure white in 1856. Earlier, hardier, and more prolific than Lima. A little tougher skin, but inferior in no other respect. Will come up in any soil that corn can break through, and survive any frost that corn will. Half-grown pods are excellent for pickling—so large as to be especially desirable for that purpose. Very good for 'snaps,' but rather late. A valuable substitute for the Lima. A single bean is sufficient for a 'hill,' or pole.

"Second—Asa Jones Amalgamate Apple—an established fruit, claimed to be the result of skill in grafting, some forty years ago in this locality, by Asa Jones. It is a mingling of the sweet and sour—the R. I. Greening and some small and earlier yellow sweet apple. I do not send it as a novelty, but as a practical, good fruit that you cannot find in the nurseries. Madeline will find it to make just as good pies as the Greening, with less sugar. It is fit to eat a month earlier and keeps a month later than the Greening. Generally it is disposed in sections of sour and sweet, indicated by green and yellow skin; but the largest fruit is less affected by sweet, and can hardly be distinguished from a genuine Greening, while the smaller specimens are entirely sweet.

"Third—Eureka Grape.

"Fourth—*Alpine Salfanus*, a foreign grape, planted first in Attica by a Swiss German, the name learned from Germans who recognized the grape from the fruit, and distinguished it from the Catawba, which it closely resembles, being even a richer fruit, ripening with the Delaware, from two to four weeks earlier than the Catawba. There may be other vines of the grape elsewhere, but I know of none."

Eggs.

Up to fifty cents per dozen again, and threatening to go higher. Mostly very small eggs, and many positively poor eggs, too—we know that by experience. Precious dear living these days, on ham and eggs. Hens won't lay at this season—so they say who keep hens. Of course they won't. Not one in forty can lay, as they are generally kept in all the regions we look to for new-laid eggs—treated more like pheasants than pullets. Permitted to run wild, scratch or starve, and sleep up in a bare tree. Hens living thus can't lay if they would.

During the warm weather seasons while worms, bugs, grasshoppers, and green forage are to be had in plenty, hens lay freely enough. So they will in fall and winter if properly provided for. Begin now, and tinker up a snug, comfortable hen house. No matter about architectural beauty—chickens don't appreciate such extravagance, and won't lay an extra egg for all the fancy ornamental work in creation. A plain, warm, convenient home is what the chickens want for winter. Provide that, with proper food, pure water, a heap of dry road-dust and ashes for them to roll and ruffle themselves in at will, and hens will lay liberally all winter. Feed frequently bits of raw meat, give them bone-dust or lime, make them a meal of mush and milk occasionally, and the chickens will pay for it all a good many times over in good eggs.

COVERING CABBAGES.

Stephen G. Collins, Esq., Cabbage King of all these regions, pursues the following cheap, convenient and expeditious practice of covering cabbages out-doors to keep over winter: Every other row of cabbages being pulled and pitched aside out of the way, a trench is opened with the plough along their line of growth, into which the cabbages from three rows are laid carefully crosswise, "heads and points," and then a furrow or two turned on from either side, and some finishing off with the spade puts away under ground, good for the winter, the cabbage crop at less cost than any other plan we have ever seen or heard of.

Mr. Collins, whose long practice has taught him all that is worth knowing about growing and keeping cabbages, informs us that in no other manner can a crop be stored so cheaply and so successfully. His cabbages invariably come out of the earth in spring sound, sweet, crisp, and beautifully blanched.

GATHERED GRAINS.

——California is beginning to ship her fine Pacific wheat 'round the Horn to Liverpool. The other day a San Francisco house got an English order by lightning to purchase wheat six hours before that on which it left London, and before sunset the same day the Londoners get advice from the San Franciscans that the order was filled and ship taking in cargo.

——The rinderpest has come out epidemic again in several places along the Gulf of Finland. It is just as likely as not to travel westward again.

——A female farmer writes us from S. W. Missouri as follows:—"Myself and two daughters, besides doing all the other work of a 160 acre farm, have harvested and sold this year $1,700 worth of wheat at $1.25 per bushel—not a man about the place."

——It is said that in no single instance has a northern man made enough this year in growing cotton or anything else down south to pay expenses. Some mistake, or else something wrong about it. We know very many southern localities where, if a man cannot make money growing cotton or corn, or almost anything else than weeds, he cannot anywhere in this world.

——In 1876 we shall have all our northern markets better supplied with better and cheaper oranges and lemons grown in Florida and Louisiana than we have ever had them from abroad.

——We saw last week a black bob-tailed, no horned, goat-looking cow, pure native, in the eighteenth consecutive month of milking, and without any extra feeding, giving sixteen quarts per day of very creamy, rich milk. The Dutch proprietor of Muley Bob says: "I sells not mine black gows for more ash hunder forty tollar." And Teuton is right.

RECEIPTS.

FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

RYE BREAD.—I have read at least twenty earnest inquiries after an infallible formula for making good rye bread. My method is infallible in my own practice, and if faithfully followed, I believe it will be so with all others.

Many people make bread of rye flour alone; but I prefer one-fourth coarse ground, yellow corn meal. The bread makes up and bakes better, has always an edible crust, is sweeter, more palatable, keeps longer, and being more readily digested, is of course more wholesome.

For two 2 lb. loaves, or four of 1 lb., take 1 lb. coarse corn meal. Make a thin batter of the meal by stirring it into scalding hot water (milk is better,) then put the three lbs. of rye flour into the kneading bowl or pan, sprinkle over it a tablespoonful of fine salt, make a cavity in the centre, pour in the corn meal batter, mix with warm water, or milk, if you have and can afford it; knead the dough thoroughly first, then add the same quantity of good leaven of any kind you would use for wheat bread; knead again, divide into loaves and put them in deep flaring tin baking basins well greased, cover with a clean cloth, and when risen so that the surface begins to crack, set the pans in an oven so moderately heated that it will require from three to three and a half hours to bake through. The test to ascertain if the bread is done quite through, is to thrust into the loaf a clean, smooth splinter of wood. If done, the splinter will come out clean.

CORN BREAKFAST CAKES.—The funny part of almost everybody's recipes is, quantities are always arbitrary—always so much flour, meal, milk, sugar, butter, etc., whether the material to be made is to serve two or twenty—so, being above or below these cardinal figures, cooks in attempting to "follow copy" often make "pie" out of puddings.

A scale of numbers seems to me to be the first necessity of culinary economy. So, if I am going to make nice corn cakes for four Christians, having respectable appetites, I use one pound of yellow corn meal, half a pound of wheat flour and three teaspoonsful of *Azumea*—the whole to be stirred together and passed through a sieve. Then I beat up thoroughly four eggs, put in for shortening two spoonsful of clean, sweet, fat drippings, turn in the eggs, and using warm milk, I stir the compound into a stiff batter. Having the griddle hissing hot and liberally larded, the batter is dropped on in spoonsful, fried to a rich brown on both sides, served piping hot, and eaten—so far as I have seen, very much as hungry people eat good things.

ROSE HILL CAKE.—I, for one, protest against the stereotyped, everlasting "10 eggs, 4 lbs. of white sugar, 2 lbs. of butter," &c., &c., all extravagantly expensive, as the arbitrary necessities of a good cake.

The articles are all nice, and very proper in their place and duly proportioned. But put in by pounds, out of all reason as they are by popular cook books and amateur cooks, making pound cakes out of butter and eggs and sugar—no wonder we die so many times as we do.

The proper material for making the very best cakes of any kind is good *wheat flour*, with the eggs, sugar and butter as concomitants, instead of principals; and to make a Rose Hill cake good enough for any table or occasion, the following is the rule:

For four cakes of half a pound each, 1½ lbs. of good flour. Stir thoroughly into the flour three teaspoonsful of *Morris Azumea*, and then sift through a fine sieve. Break and beat up to a froth five fresh eggs, ¾ lb. butter, warm to softness—but don't melt it. Then stir vigorously together eggs, butter and 1½ lbs of good light sugar. These being well mixed, turn the material over the flour, sprinkle on a dessert spoonful of salt, flavor with rose water, wet up to a stiff batter with milk, divide into four parts, put into well greased two quart tins, sow a handful of good, well washed Zante currants over each cake, and bake at once to a clear, bright brown.

MADELINE.

THE RIDDLER.

Enigma for the Boys.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

I am composed of 7 letters.
My 2, 5, 3, is a boy's delight.
My 7, 5, 6, is a boy's name.
My 4, 5, 3, is what a boy should not do.
My 3, 4, 5, 7, is what the possession of my 2, 5, 3, causes a boy to be.
My 6, 1, 7, is a boy's name.
My 3, 4, 1, 1, is what boys are generally full of.
My 4, 1, 3, is part of a boy.
My 3, 4, 1, 5, is where boys love to ramble in the summer.
My whole is a great country, which any boy can easily find on the map of the Eastern Hemisphere.

WM. H. MORROW.
Irwin Station, Pa.

Enigma.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

I am composed of 16 letters.
My 4, 3, 9, 6, is a flower.
My 14, 15, 16, is a collection of houses.
My 9, 8, 4, 8, 10, is a girl's name.
My 10, 3, 5, is an animal.
My 16, 3, 3, 10, is a boy's name.
My 3, 10, 11, 15, is one of the states.
My 16, 11, 5, 6, 4, is a river in Africa.
My 6, 4, 11, 2, is a lake in North America.
My 10, 3, 4, 9, 6, is an animal.
My 8, 13, 16, is a cape.
My 5, 4, 2, 6, 16, is a range of mountains in the United States.
My whole was the name of a great man.

CHRISTINE.

Anagrams.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

Rguho mhrca seomo tirbuelsgus ndwo het a dor.
Nl sih rtwah ndha hte nexso dago.
Ro tiwh a guroh uds gayrn ahtes.
Stractse eth dese ero hte rkad staew.

C. M. B.

Mathematical Problem.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

Required the number of equal circles, each 30 rods in diameter, which must be described tangent to each other and cutting off equal areas from a circle 100 rods in diameter, so that the aggregate quantity thus cut off shall be a maximum.

ARTEMAS MARTIN.
Franklin, Venango Co., Pa.
☞ An answer is requested.

Problem.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

If money be worth 10 per cent. per annum, what is the present value of a 7 per cent. bond, interest payable semi-annually, running 20 years?

D. H. PINGREY.
Harrisburg Business College, Pa.
☞ An answer is requested.

Problem.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

What is the least number which being divided by each of the 9 digits (excepting 7) will always give a remainder one less than the divisor?

MORGAN STEVENS.
☞ An answer is requested.

Mathematical Question.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

A certain number of cannon balls each 6 inches in diameter, are built up, on hard, level bottom, into a triangular pyramidical pile, by placing them compact into the grooves of each other, finished by a single bullet at the top, and well secured on the three sides, so that those above cannot press out those below. Said pile is found to be 99.08061022564 inches in perpendicular height. What are the number of balls in said pile?

DELTA.
☞ An answer is requested.

Conundrums.

☞ What lady is good to eat? Ans.—Sal. Ladd.

☞ What lady is good to eat with her? Ans.—Olive Oil.

☞ What lady is made to carry burdens? Ans.—Ella Fant.

☞ What lady preaches in the pulpit? Ans.—Minnie Stir.

☞ What lady does everybody desire? Ans.—Ann U. Ity.

☞ What lady is acquainted with surgery? Ans.—Ann Atomy.

Answers to Last.

ENIGMA—"How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon that bank." TRANSPOSITION—Paste. RIDDLE—Niagara Falls.

An Illustration.

Dr. Adam Clark was preaching to a large congregation in Ireland, and after dwelling in glowing terms upon the freeness of the Gospel, and telling them that the water of life could be had "without money and without price," at the conclusion of the sermon a person announced that a collection would be made to support the Gospel in foreign parts. This announcement disconcerted the preacher, who afterwards related the circumstance to the lady of the house where he was staying. "Very true, doctor," replied the hostess, "the water of life is free without money and without price, but we must pay for pitchers to carry it in."

☞ A man who has lost his nose, says an old Scotch journal, has peculiar advantages. He cannot follow his nose, but then he cannot be poking it into everything. He cannot blow his nose, but then he cannot take snuff, which is, however, another. If he goes to sleep you cannot tickle his nose; and when he is awake he cannot run his nose against a post. Let him drink hard, he will never have a red nose, and never will be exposed to the nickname of Nosey; and let him be as impertinent as he will, he may defy you to pull his nose. "Sir," said a man to another with a false nose, "I'll pull your nose." "Sir," said he, "I'll put my nose in my pocket."